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Dungeon Crawl Classics #17

Legacy of the Savage Kings

by Harley Stroh

AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 4-6



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For centuries, the Great Swamp has hidden hints of an ancient culture of barbarian kings. While passing through this miserable bog, the heroes encounter Stygoth the Damned, a half-dead black dragon driven mad by a mysterious disease. Delving further, the heroes discover that the disease is tied to the very swamp itself. A great corruption once infested this place, destroying the savage barbarian kings and leaving only mighty statues as their legacy. Now this corruption has returned, and a terrible Witch Queen is mining the corrupted swamp-earth to produce evil, blighted artifacts. In order to stop the spread of these evil weapons, the heroes must enter the ancient caves of the savage kings, put to rest the corrupt legacy of their downfall, end the disease that scars the land, and then face off against the Witch Queen herself.

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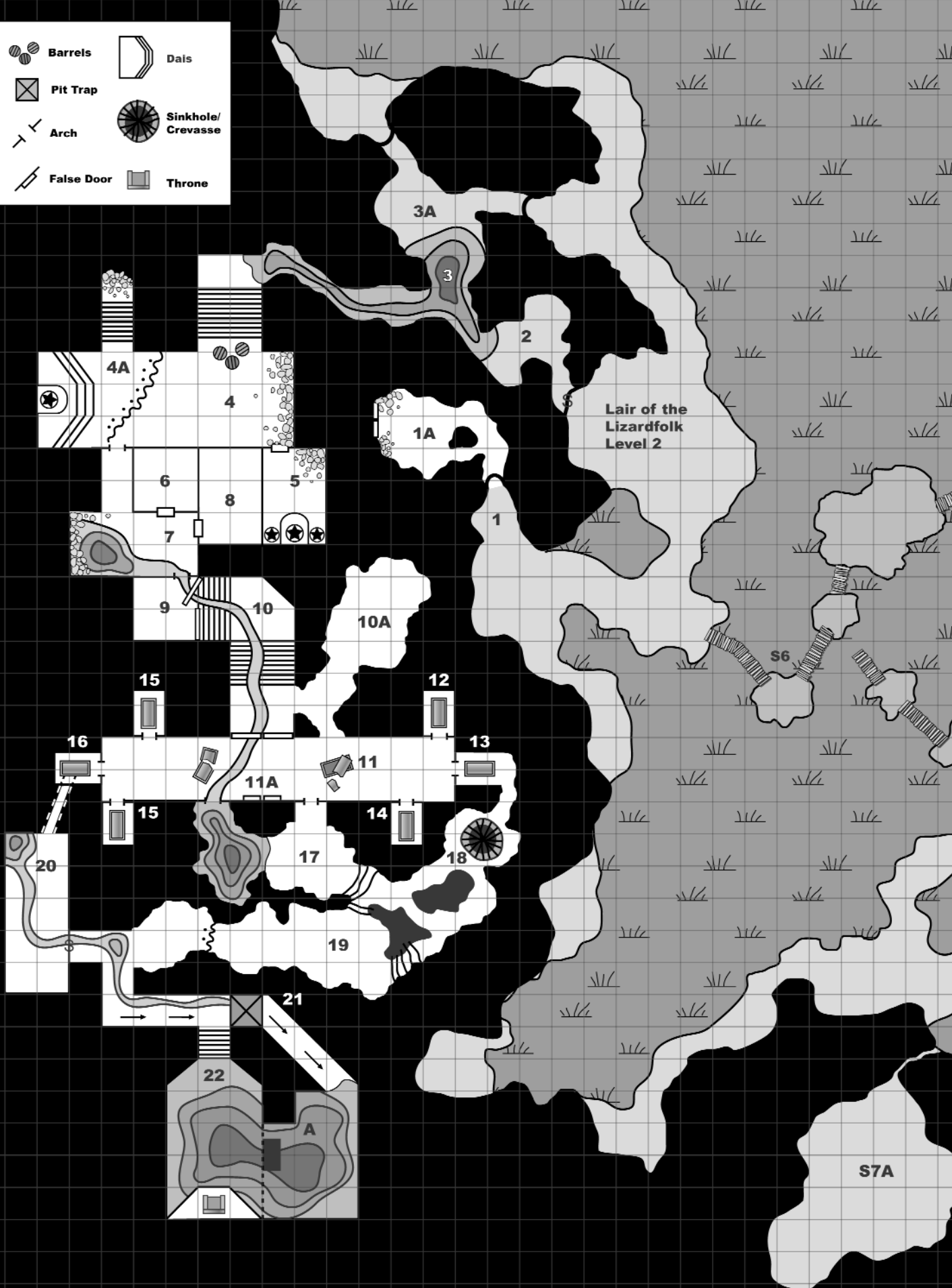


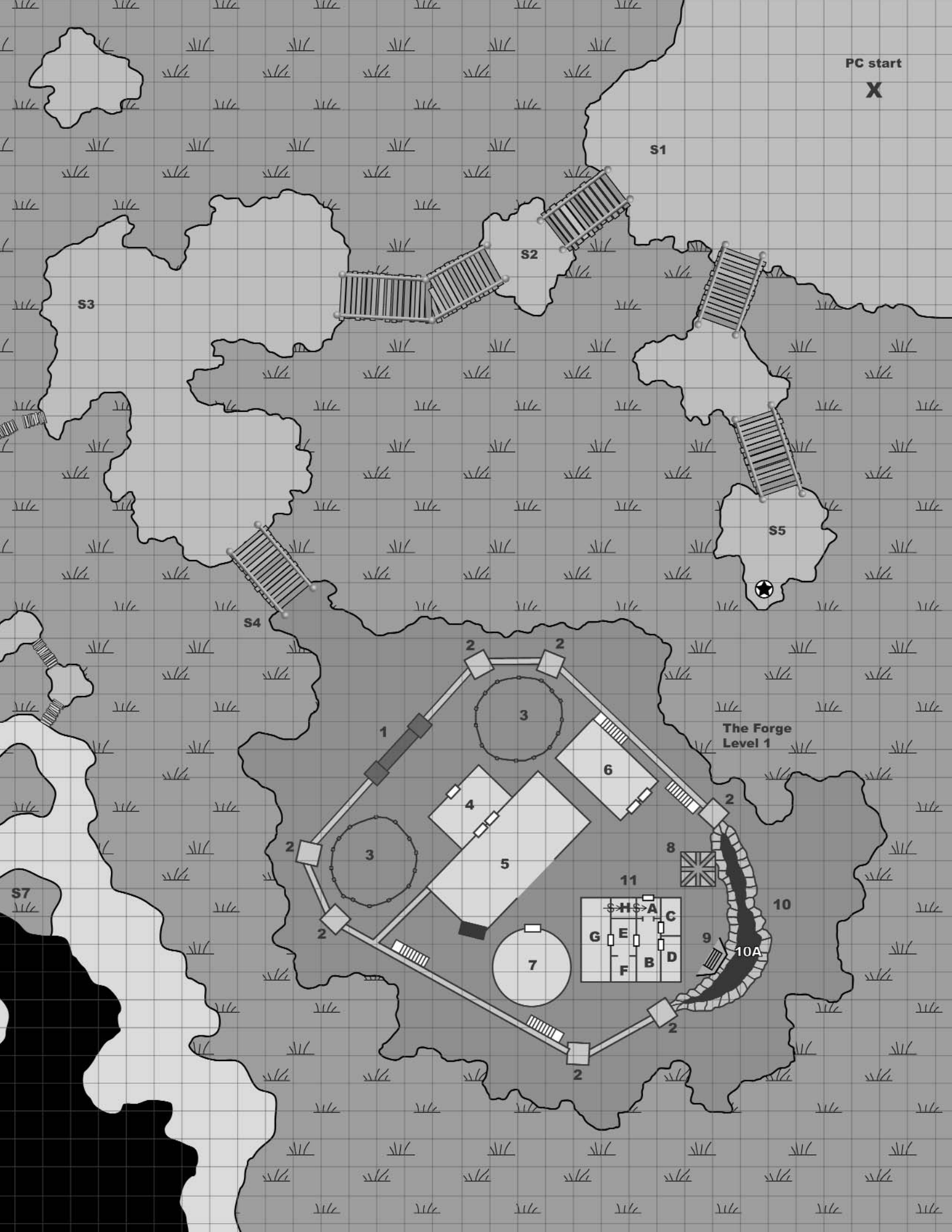
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PC start

X

S1

S2

S3

S5

S4

The Forge
Level 1

S7

1

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2

3

6

4

5

3

2

2

7

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10A

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For my brother and friend, the Saurus.



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Introduction

Remember the golden days of role playing, when adventures were underground, NPCs were there to be killed, and the finale of every dungeon was the dragon on the 20th level? Well, those days are back. Dungeon Crawl Classics feature bloody combat, intriguing dungeons, and no NPCs who aren't meant to be killed. Each adventure is 100% good, solid dungeon crawl, with the monsters you know, the traps you fear, and the secret doors you know must be there somewhere.

Legacy of the Savage Kings is designed for four to six characters of 4th to 6th level, with a total of 22-26 total character levels between party members. While the characters can be of any basic character class, a good mix of character classes is helpful. Fighters, rogues, and combat-oriented spell casters will see a lot of action, but ambitious wizards and clerics will have the most to gain from the Witch Queen's demise. See the "Scaling Information" section for ways to tailor this adventure to your group's unique style of play.

Adventure Summary

For centuries, the Great Swamp has hidden hints of an ancient culture of barbarian kings. While passing through this miserable bog, the PCs encounter Stygoth the Damned, a half-dead black dragon driven mad by a mysterious disease. Delving further, the heroes discover that the disease is tied to the very swamp itself. A great corruption once infested this place, destroying the savage barbarian kings and leaving only mighty statues as their legacy. Now this corruption has returned, and a terrible Witch Queen is mining the corrupted swamp-earth to produce evil, blighted artifacts. In order to stop the spread of these evil weapons, the heroes must enter the ancient caves of the savage kings, put to rest the corrupt legacy of their downfall, end the disease that scars the land, and then face off against the Witch Queen herself.



The source of the disease is the Forge, a fortress hidden in the middle of the swamp. The Forge is ruled by Kyleth, the Witch Queen, and defended by an army of monstrous humanoids. Here, corrupted earth, cursed by a demon prince, is being forged into evil weapons and artifacts of great power. To cure the corruption, the party must find and destroy the skull of the demon prince. The search takes the party to an ancient barbarian tomb, now the lair of a tribe of wicked lizardfolk. Fighting and skulking their way through the lair, the PCs retrieve the demon skull, defeat a lizardfolk warrior reborn as a god-king, and return to the Forge to put an end to the corruption. There, before a gaping Maw of corrupted earth, the heroes face off with Kyleth and her minions, destroying the demon skull and the Blight forever. In the course of the adventure, the party can discover the *Ars Maleficus* (a grimoire of witch lore), discover the lost trove of Stygoth the Damned, and plunder the treasure vault of a barbarian warlord.

The destruction of the Forge need not be the end of the Witch Queen. Kyleth is a pragmatic and deadly foe, and realizes that any number of heroes conspire to bring her low. She has made contingencies for most threats - even, if necessary, returning from beyond the grave.

Game Master's Section

Encounter Table

To help the GM prepare, we have included a quick reference table showing all encounters at a glance. **Loc** - the location number keyed to the map for the encounter. **Pg** - the module page number that the encounter can be found on. **Type** - this indicates if the encounter is a trap (T), puzzle (P), or combat (C). **Encounter** - the key monsters, traps, or NPCs that can be found in the encounter. Names in *italics* are classed NPCs. **EL** - the encounter level.

Loc	Pg	Type	Encounter	EL
S-1	6	C	Stygoth, diseased adult black dragon	9
S-2	7	C	5 orcs	3
S-3	7	C	<i>Mad Hermit</i> , elf Clr6 10 skeletons	7
S-4	8	P	Warded bridge	2
S-5	9	C	Animated statue	2
S-6	9	C	4 lizardfolk	5
1-1	11	C	9 kobolds 5 gnolls	7
1-2	12	C	3 kobolds	1
1-4	12	T	<i>Burning hands</i> trap	3
1-5	13	C	<i>Graah</i> , ogre Ftr2/Exp1 5 kobolds	7
1-6	13	C	5 gnolls	5

Loc	Pg	Type	Encounter	EL
1-7	14	C	<i>Torgo the Eye-Gouger</i> , 7 kobold Ftr1/Rog1 30 kobolds	7
1-8	14	C	5 kobolds, 1 gnoll	3
1-10	15	C	Earth elemental	3
1-10A	16	C	10 kobolds, 1 gnoll	4
1-11	16	C	3 gnolls	3
1-11A	16	T	Floor blade trap	3
		T	Zombifying gas	5
1-11D	17	C	<i>Backra</i> , goblin Clr2/Sor2/Exp2	6
1-11E	18	T	Poison needle	2
		T	Zombifying gas	5
1-11F	18	C	<i>Maeve</i> , Sor2/Rog1	3
1-11G	19	C	<i>Kyleth</i> , Sor6, and quasit familiar	7
1-11H	21	T	<i>Fireball</i> trap	5
2-1	22	C	2 shadows	4
2-1A	22	T	Blood Gate trap	4
2-2	23	C	4 lizardfolk	4
2-3	23	C	Giant crocodile	4
2-4	23	C	9 lizardfolk	6
2-4A	24	C	Water elemental	3
		P	Channeling pool	-
2-5	25	P	The 3 Fates of Man	-
2-6	25	T	Collapsing room	3
2-7	25	C	4 lizardfolk	4
2-8	25	C	Zombie owlbear	6
2-10A	26	C	Giant constrictor snake	5
2-11	26	C	1 lizardfolk	1
2-11A	27	T	False door trap	5
2-12	27	C	2 animated vines	4
		C	Mummy	5
2-13	27	C	Mummy	5
2-14	28	C	Mummy	5
2-16	28	C	2 mummified winter wolves	7
2-17	29	C	8 lizardfolk	6
2-18	29	C	<i>N'dereg</i> , deposed lizardfolk king Ftr5	6
2-19	30	C	4 lizardfolk Lizardfolk shaman Drd2 Lizardfolk king Ftr2	8
2-20	30	P	<i>Obitu-que</i> , demon skull	Special
2-21	31	T	Pit	1
2-22	31	C	Augmented lizardfolk king from 2-21	Special
2-22A	33	C	4 animated statues	4
Return	33	C	10 elite orcs Ftr1	9



Scaling Information

Legacy of the Savage Kings is designed for 4-6 characters of 4th-6th level, but it can be easily modified for parties of different sizes or levels. *However, certain encounters are designed to leave the party outmatched in head-to-head combat.* This will encourage the PCs to resort to stealth, magic, and guile to achieve what brute force cannot.

With this in mind, consider adapting the adventure using any of the following suggestions:

Weaker parties (3 or fewer characters, or lower than 4th level): Have Stygoth leave after only 1 round. Reduce the DCs for all traps by 2, and remove the zombifying gas from areas 1-11A and 1-11E. Don't allow encounters to draw additional monsters, and play the defenders of the Forge and the Lizardfolk Lair as careless and overconfident.

Stronger parties (7 or more characters, or higher than 6th level): Double the chances for wandering monsters. Add 2 dire wolves to location 1-8, and play the defenders of the Forge as wary and well trained. Increase the DC for all traps by 3. Double the number of unexceptional lizardfolk listed in locations 2-4, 2-17, and 2-19. Add three crocodiles to location 2-3A, and a second giant constrictor snake to area 2-10A. Double the number of surviving animated statues in area 2-22A. Most importantly, allow loud, violent encounters to draw additional monsters from nearby areas (especially the defenders of the Forge, and the mummies from locations 2-12 to 2-14).

Getting the Players Involved

The adventure begins with the characters on the northeast edge of the Great Swamp. Use one of the following plot hooks to get the characters started:

- The Lord-Castellan of a nearby keep has hired the characters to investigate rumors of an army amassing in the Great Swamp. Heavily-guarded caravans have been spotted leaving the halls of the Mountain King, and returning from the Great Swamp with evil weapons of great power.
- A thief returns to the Freehold Thieves' Guild delirious with stories of a mighty fortress hidden in the Great Swamp, where caravans of gold and slaves enter and never come out. The thief dies shortly thereafter of a mysterious disease, his body consumed with profane rot.
- An archdruid requests that the characters investigate rumors of a poisonous corruption stemming from the Great Swamp. Fields and farms downstream of the swamp have already begun to sicken,

with and die, and the druids are desperate to learn the source of the evil.

- A merchant prince hires the party to rescue his son's fiancé. The poor girl was captured by a party of gnolls and carried off into the Great Swamp. He offers a purse of 1,000 gold coins to anyone who can bring her abductors to justice.
- The characters inherit the deed to a manor and a parcel of land adjacent to the Great Swamp. Their duties as nobles include clearing out the monsters threatening the serfs that farm the lands of the manor.

Background Story

Long before the shining empires of the south dared to lay claim to the Borderlands, fierce barbarians called the dark moors their home. The land still bears their mark: brooding statues that stare out over the lonely fens, and grim tombs left crumbling amid the dour granite cliffs.

Of the many tales of this dark age, the most terrifying is that of the demon Obitu-que. Ballads tell how the demon prince swept through the tribes of barbarians, sacrificing entire villages to dark powers. Finally, the demon was cut down by the last of the great Savage Kings, its five-eyed skull brought back on a spear, and the reign of terror passed.

The ballads fail to tell the entire story. The demon's evil was so great it tainted the very spirit of the land. Long after the moldering bodies rotted away, a dark sliver of corruption was found in the earth, a magical disease known as the Blight.

The Present

From deep within a barbarian tomb, the spirit of Obitu-que stirs. The demon spirit has possessed a tribe of lizardfolk, corrupting their minds and souls, and once again the demon prince's thoughts turn towards the shining lands of man.

Meanwhile, the Blight has grown. Kyleth, the self-styled Witch Queen, has built a mining camp above the vein of fouled earth. Her minions forge cruel weapons from the Blight, poisoning the land with the corrupted tailings. The only way to heal the Blight is to destroy the skull of Obitu-

que at the site of the original slaughter, putting the spirit of the land to rest. Until then, the Witch Queen trades cruel weapons to the Mountain King, who prepares his evil armies for war.

Blight, the Rotting Death

The Blight is not a natural disease, nor can a body fight it with natural means. Untreated, patients growing sicker by the day as their organs shut down and begin to decompose, resulting in a slow and painful death.

For the first three days, the victim simply undergoes a great deal of pain. Every day following, they lose 1 point of Strength, Constitution, and Dexterity. When one of these stats reaches 3, the character falls into a coma. When one of these stats reaches zero, the character dies.

If *remove disease* is cast within the first week, it removes the Blight altogether. Creatures with advanced cases (like Stygoth) are already dead in everything but name. To these poor souls, *remove disease* will inflict 1d10 points of damage per caster level.

Destroying the source of the Blight ends all cases of the magical plague.

Fortunately, it is difficult to catch the disease. One must either be steeped in Blight-infused waters for two weeks or more, or be struck for at least 15 points of damage by a creature carrying the disease (e.g., the dragon Stygoth). In each case the victim may make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to avoid contracting the Blight.

Character Death

Defeating the Witch Queen will require balancing quick action with careful planning. The Great Swamp is an unforgiving environment with no tolerance for fools. In the unfortunate case of character death, there are several opportunities to introduce new heroes. New characters might have escaped from the slave caravan (location S-1), be found as prisoners of the lizardfolk (location 2-4), or share the pit with the deposed lizard king (area 2-18).

New characters should not be found as slaves of the Witch Queen (location 1-3). Starved and mutilated beyond recognition, her wards make poor additions to a party of heroes.



Player Beginning

Start the adventure by reading the following:

A thick fog hangs heavily over the chill swamp, turning the sun into a weak, red glow. Dead trees loom like skeletons in the mist, and everywhere is the stench of rot and death.

The silence is broken by a terrible thrashing sound. There are the cries of frightened horses, mixed with the ragged screams of the dying.

A horse emerges from the mist, dragging its fallen rider behind. It is difficult to discern the rider's race or gender. Where the torso should be are just wet loops of intestines trailing through the grass and mud.

The horse and rider belong to an orc slave caravan on its way to the Forge, a caravan being destroyed by Stygoth the Damned at location S-1. If characters catch hold of the horse they will be able to discern a few clues: the saddle is designed for mounted combat, and is branded with the sign of the crown and mountain. The rider was wearing rusting chainmail and roughshod boots.

If the party lingers, the sounds of battle will cease after five rounds, replaced by an ominous silence. At this point Stygoth (area S-1) is aware of the characters and will attack at his leisure.

Level S: The Great Swamp

The swamp is made up of bogs punctuated by small, marshy islands. Except where noted, the bogs are covered in 3 feet of dark, brackish water, while islands are covered in grass and rushes.

Creatures fighting from the bogs lose any Dexterity bonuses to their armor class. Bogs increase the DC of Tumble, Move Silently and similar skill checks by 2.

A heavy mist hangs over the marsh, obscuring all sight, including darkvision, beyond 25 feet. Creatures 25 feet away have total concealment; attacks against them have a 20% miss chance. The mist obscures the sun enough that creatures with sensitivity to light do not suffer any of the usual ill effects.

Bridges: These are made of stout timbers and rise 1 foot above the level of the bog. Built by slave labor in the last six months, they have not yet begun to rot. The wet conditions of the swamp render them resistant to nearly all forms of fire; they must be dealt 50 points of fire damage before they will begin to burn.

Log bridges: These are fallen trees resting mere inches above the water. Most are rotting and all are slick with algae and moss. Creatures engaging in combat atop the logs must make DC 10 Balance checks each round or fall prone.

Wandering Monsters

Check for wandering monsters once every hour in the swamps. Roll a d6; an encounter occurs on a 1. If an encounter is called for, roll 1d12 to determine the creature encountered. Note that characters can actually seek refuge by fleeing towards the Forge; swamp natives have learned not to come closer than 25 ft. to

the well-defended fortress.

1d12	Encounter
1	1 annis (hag)
2	1-3 crocodiles
3-4	1-4 lizardfolk hunters
5-7	2-12 kobolds
8-10	1-2 merrow (aquatic ogres)
11	1 giant crocodile
12	1-3 ghaists

The following statistics are provided for easy reference.

Annis, hag: CR 6; Large Monstrous Humanoid; HD 7d8+14; hp 45; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +7; Grp +18; Atk Claw +13 melee (1d6+7); Full Atk 2 claws +13 melee (1d6+7) and bite +8 melee (1d6+3); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab, rake (1d6+7), rend (2d6+10), spell-like abilities; SQ Damage reduction 2/bludgeoning, darkvision 60 ft., spell resistance 19; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 25, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +0 (+2 acting), Hide +5, Intimidate +2, Listen +10, Spot +10; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day - *disguise self*, *fog cloud*. Caster level 8th.

Possessions: 1d4 shrunken skulls, 3d20 gp.

Crocodile: CR 2; Medium Animal; HD 3d8+9; hp 22; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk/Full Atk Bite +6 melee (1d8+6) or tail slap +6 melee (1d12+6); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab; SQ Hold breath, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7, Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim +12; Alertness, Skill Focus (Hide)

Lizardfolk: CR 1; Medium Humanoid (reptilian); HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk spiked club +2 melee (1d6+2) or javelin +1 ranged (1d6+1); Full Atk spiked club +2 melee (1d6+2) and bite +0 melee (1d4); or javelin +1 ranged (1d6+1); SQ Hold breath; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Jump +5, Swim +2; Multiattack.

Possessions: Spiked club, 3 javelins, large wooden shield.

Kobold: CR 1/4; Small Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 4; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp -4; Atk/Full Atk half spear +1 melee (1d6-1/x3) or sling +3 ranged (1d3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Profession (miner) +2, Search +2, Spot +2; Alertness.

Possessions: Halfspear, leather armor, sling and bullets.

Merrow (Aquatic Ogre): CR 3; Large Giant; HD 4d8+11; hp 29; Init -1; Spd 30 ft., swim 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 8, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +3; Grp +12; Atk/Full Atk Longspear +8 melee (1d8+7); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Listen +2, Spot +2; Toughness, Weapon Focus (Longspear)

Possessions: Hide armor, longspear.

Giant crocodile: CR 4; Huge Animal; HD 7d8+28; hp 59; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +5; Grp +21; Atk/Full Atk Bite +11 melee (2d8+12) or tail slap +11 melee (1d12+12); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab; SQ Hold breath, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 27, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Hide +1, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +16; Alertness, Endurance, Skill Focus (Hide).

Ghast: CR 3; Medium Undead; HD 4d12+3; hp 29; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +5; Atk Bite +5 melee (1d8+3 plus paralysis); Full Atk Bite +5 melee (1d8+3 plus paralysis) and 2 claws +3 melee (1d4+1 plus paralysis); SA Ghoul fever, paralysis, stench; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, +2 turn resistance; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 17, Dex 17, Con -, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Climb +9, Hide +8, Jump +9, Move Silently +8, Spot +8; Multiattack, Toughness.

Areas of the Map

Area S-1 - Stygoth the Damned (EL 9): Read or paraphrase the following:

A massacre has occurred here. Four heavy wagons lie overturned, half submerged in the muddy waters. Bodies of fallen orcs are cast about like bloody dolls; broken spears and shattered shields litter the battlefield. Deep furrows have been torn into the muddy ground, and the stench of rot is stronger than ever.

If the PCs have arrived within five rounds of hearing the battle, read or paraphrase the following:

The battle still rages at the edge of the island. Three orcs desperately stab spears at a roaring serpentine shape that feints in and out of the swirling mists with impossible quickness.

Stygoth will take one round to kill the remaining orcs and then turn his attention on the PCs.

Stygoth is half dead and nearly blind. The dragon is rotting from the inside out; the magical organs that permit him acid breath shut down long ago, and long strips of white flesh mark where the rot has reached the surface. Crazed with pain, the dragon lashes out at anything and everyone.

Anyone striking the beast notes that the dragon seems wet and hollow. Melee attackers causing Stygoth 15 or more points of damage are rewarded with a splatter of acidic, rotting gore that burns the skin. This is a diluted form of the dragon's acid breath that now permeates the dragon's entire body. Those hit by the acidic bile must make a Fort save (DC 15) or contract the Blight. Affected characters will feel an uncomfortable warmth radiating from the stain, not unlike that given off by decomposing matter.

Stygoth fights for 2 rounds before taking to wing, roaring madly as it flaps away over the swamp, barely managing to keep off the ground.

The wagons belonged to a slave caravan en route to the Forge. The wagons once held shackled slaves of all races, but they were all slaughtered in Stygoth's attack. The corpses of sixteen armored orcs litter the island and surrounding bogs. They are armored in a mix of rusting chainmail and hide armor. A thorough looting of all the corpses (Search DC 20) will produce a handful of coins (6d6 sp), three sides of rotten mutton (what passes for orc iron rations), and a +1 *defending dagger* hidden in a boot.

Stygoth, adult black dragon: CR 9; Large Dragon; HD 19d12+76; hp 153; Init +0; Spd 60 ft.,

fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.; AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +19; Grp +29; Atk Bite +24 melee (2d6+6) or claw +24 melee (1d8+3) or wing +24 melee (1d6+3) or tail slap +24 melee (1d8+9); Full Atk +24/+19/+14 melee (-5 secondary); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. with bite); SA Breath weapon (see below), disease, corrupt water, darkness; SQ Blindsense, damage resistance 5/magic, frightful presence (DC 20), immunities (acid/paralysis/sleep), keen senses, spell resistance 18, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +11, Will +12; Str 23, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Intimidate +23, Knowledge (history) +23, Knowledge (local) +23, Listen +23, Search +23, Sense Motive +23, Spot +23; Alertness, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Snatch.

SA - Disease (Su): Any melee attack causing Stygoth 15 or more points of damage splatters the attacker with rotting gore for 1d6 points of damage. Those hit by the acidic bile must make a Fort save (DC 15) or contract the Blight.

SA - Breath Weapon: In his current state, Stygoth no longer has a breath weapon attack.

Area S-2 - Remnants of Slave Caravan (EL 3): Read or paraphrase the following:

Several figures huddle together on the small island, barking back and forth angrily. The slightest noise makes them start in fright, cruel falchions and javelins raised to threaten all comers. The largest of them shouts something at you.

These five orcs are the survivors of Stygoth's slaughter. Characters who speak Orc recognize the shouts as a warning that these creatures fight with Blight blades.

The orcs fled at the start of the attack and have huddled here since, too afraid to venture into the mist. Attempts to parlay with them will be challenging; these orcs are terrified of anything that moves and all too willing to respond with frenzied abandon.

The orcs all know the pass phrase to area S-4 ("All hail Lady Kyleth, Mistress of the Forge!") but it is just the phrase they call out when they approach the Forge. They don't understand it is a pass phrase to bypass the trap.

Treasure: The largest of the five carries a crude map of the great swamp (give out players handout A) and a cruelly serrated longsword - a Blight Blade (see page 34).

Orcs (5): CR 1/2; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 8, 7, 4, 5, 9; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 10,

flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk Battleaxe +4 melee (1d8+4/x3) or javelin +1 ranged (1d6+3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -2; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 7, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +1, Spot +1; Alertness.

Possessions: Battleaxe, 3 javelins, chainmail, 1d6 sp.

Area S-3 - Hovel of the Hermit: Read or paraphrase the following:

A small, mud-sided hut is built against the stump of a rotting tree. A thin trail of smoke meanders overhead.

PCs investigating the hut will discover:

Inside the hut is a boiling cauldron hanging over a small fire. The bones of birds, rodents and other small creatures litter the floor, and a short stack of humanoid skulls forms a pyramid on the back wall. Atop the pyramid is an unlit black candle mashed into an eye socket. The hut smells of rotting wood and smoke, and everything in the place has a grimy coat of grease and soot.

An ancient elf sits before the fire, adding lizard legs to the cauldron. The elf's flesh hangs in loose, graying flaps, making its gender impossible to determine.

The Mad Hermit will hasten to welcome the party into his hovel, offering them warm "tea" from the cauldron. Regardless of the PCs' responses, the elf watches them with wide, unblinking eyes, frosted white with cataracts.

The elf is the swamp's oldest living inhabitant. All that sustains him is his absolute, unwavering hatred of the demon Obitu-que. Consumed by hatred and madness, the elf is attempting to raise an army to aid him in his war against the demon.

The Mad Hermit gibbers incoherently about demon princes, lizardfolk, skulls, witch queens and an eldritch plague. At some point the Mad Hermit ceases his ramblings and enters a moment of lucidity. He quietly asks the PCs if they are here to fight the Witch Queen. With a sinister glint in his eyes, he asks them to join his army. Regardless of their answers, the Hermit raises his hands, awakening the 10 skeletons hidden beneath the earth of the hut, and launches into an attack, attempting to "recruit" the party into his undead army.

Treasure: Three rolled hides are hidden behind the pyramid of skulls (Search DC 15). Each matted, bloody hide is covered with the Hermit's erratic



handwriting. The three rawhide scrolls represent the sum of the Hermit's knowledge of the Witch Queen, the Demon Skull and the Blight plague. Unfortunately, the majority of notes are the confused ramblings of a mad elf. In the corner of the last, the PCs find the only meaningful passage (give out players handout B):

....the first part bile of toad, cast with bones, set aflame. The Disease has claimed the Dragon. With the Dragon gone who has the power to crush the Witch and her Army? But there is another way - entrails tell me her power is drawn from the Corrupted Earth, the same Taint born from the sins of the Demon.

The Savage King killed the Demon once, sealing his bloody trophy in his tomb. Have the Lizards awakened It?

It falls to my army to finish the task: bearing the Skull to its final resting place, and feeding the Maw its bitter pill. Found three dead ravens in the swamp today. The end is near...

Mad Hermit, elf Clr6: CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 6d8; hp 27; Init 0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +4; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk sickle +2 melee (1d6-2) or dart +4 ranged (1d4-2); SQ immune to sleep, turn and rebuke undead; AL

CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +9; Str 7, Dex 11, Con 7, Int 9, Wis 18, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +0, Hide +3, Spot +7; Combat Casting, Iron Will, Brew Potion.

Cleric Spells Prepared (5/4+1/4+1/3+1; save DC 14 + spell level): 0 - *guidance, mending, read magic, resistance, virtue*; 1st - *bane, cause fear*, command, doom, summon monster I*; 2nd - *aid, death knell, desecrate*, hold person (x2)*; 3 - *animate dead*, inflict serious wounds, summon monster III (x2)*. *Domain spell.

Domains: Death, Evil.

Possessions: 5 darts, sickle.

Skeletons (10): CR 1/3; Medium Undead; HD 1d12; hp 6; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +0; Grp +1; Atk Scimitar +1 melee (1d6+1/18-20) or claw +1 melee (1d4+1); Full Atk Scimitar +1 melee (1d6+1/18-20) or 2 claws +1 melee (1d4+1); SQ Damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, undead traits; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 13, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

Feats: Improved Initiative

Possessions: Heavy steel shield, scimitar.

Area S-4 - Bridge of Skulls (EL 2): Read or paraphrase the following:

The wooden bridge stretches out over the

swamp, its far end lost in the fog. A dozen sharpened stakes line each side, a skull impaled upon every one. A crow sits atop one of the more recent kills, absently picking at the rotting flesh.

Catching sight of you, the crow caws twice, then takes to wing.

The fifth skull on the northeast side of the bridge has been enchanted with two spells. The first is *magic mouth*. If a humanoid comes within 10' of the south end of the bridge without speaking the pass phrase, "All hail Kyleth, Mistress of the Forge," the skull begins to scream in terror. This will alert the defenders of the Forge (level 1), who will go on high alert.

The screaming *magic mouth* triggers the second spell: *cause fear* (DC 11, Will save negates). The point of origin of the *cause fear* is the northern end of the bridge, so a creature affected by the spell will flee south and east, towards the Forge, which will be frothing with gnolls and kobolds.

The remainder of the skulls are non-magical, and belong to the common humanoid races: humans, elves, dwarves, and halflings. The skulls have a hardness of 2 and 4 hit points each.

Cause Fear Trap: CR 2; magical device; audible trigger (*magic mouth*); manual reset; spell effect (*cause fear*, 1st-level sorcerer, one creature of 5 HD or less flees for 1d4 rounds, DC 11 Will save negates); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 26.

Area S-5 - Isle of Fallen (EL 2): Read or paraphrase the following:

The banks of this small island are shrouded in the ever-present mist, but the gloom seems even more prevalent here. The island is barren of life except for a single gnarled oak. At the far end of the island is a toppled statue of some sort, buried in moss and the spongy turf.

This was the first route Kyleth and her kobolds tried when they built the bridges to the Forge. When the kobolds discovered the Fallen King they refused to work any further, and the highway of bridges had to be built taking a longer route.

The monolith buried in the moss is a crudely carved statue of a brooding barbarian king. If the PCs come closer than 15 feet, the Fallen King rouses himself from his sleep, shakes the moss from his granite battleaxe, and charges into battle one last time.

The statue is a tribute to the barbarian king that defeated the demon Obitu-que. A carved five-eyed demon skull hangs from the statue's belt (Search

DC 10). This is crude stone imitation of the real skull found in area 2-20.

Treasure: In addition to the interesting demon skull, PCs that take the time to search the island carefully (Search DC 20) will discover a massive onyx circlet half-buried in the mud on the southern tip of the island. Over five feet in diameter, its twin ends are capped in balls of burnished silver. On the inside of the circlet is the following phrase, etched in Draconic: *Prince and Pauper, King and Knave. Equals in His wake.*

The phrase is a riddle. If the answer, *Death*, is spoken, the wearer and the circlet assume *gaseous form* for 3 rounds. Up to 3 Medium-sized creatures, or 5 Small creatures, can stand inside the band and activate its powers. The power can be activated 3 times per day.

The circlet once hung around the neck of the dragon Stygoth, who used it to gain entrance into his lair. Stygoth lost the circlet in a fit of Blight-induced madness, and has been unable to enter his lair since.

Fallen King: CR 2; Medium Construct; HD 2d10+20; hp 35; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk Slam +2 melee (1d6+1); SQ Construct traits, dark-vision 60 ft., low-light vision, Hardness 8; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5; Str 12, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Area S-6 – Ambush! (EL 5): This log bridge is identical to the ones before, except for the 4 lizardfolk hunters concealed in the reeds and rushes. The lizardfolk have perfected their ambush technique and will only be noticed on a successful Spot check (DC 25).

The hunters wait until the bulk of the party is on the log, then spring their attack. One pulls the chocks supporting the log, dropping anyone aboard who fails a Ref save (DC 20) into the 7 ft. deep water. Two hunters hurl weighted nets at those flailing in the water; characters successfully entangled suffer -2 penalty to their Swim checks. The last hurl javelins at obvious threats, then all four close for melee.

If the battle goes poorly for the lizardfolk, the smallest will dive into the water and try to warn his fellows in level 2.

Lizardfolk (4): CR 1; Medium Humanoid (reptilian); HD 2d8+2; hp 16, 14, 11, 10; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk spiked club +2 melee (1d6+2) or javelin +1 ranged (1d6+1) or net +1 ranged (entangle); Full



Atk spike club +2 melee (1d6+2) and bite +0 melee (1d4) or javelin +1 ranged (1d6+1) or net +1 ranged (entangle); SQ Hold breath; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Hide +5, Swim +2; Multiattack.

Possessions: Spiked club, 3 javelins, weighted net, large wooden shield.

Area S-7 – Stygoth’s Lair: Read or paraphrase the following:

Blackened vines and gnarled taproots dot the hard, granite cliffs here. At the base of the cliff is stagnate pool of water. Above the pool is a small hole, no larger than a human fist, dug into the cliff wall.

The floor of the pool is covered in bones buried in two feet of standing water. The bones make an uneven surface, reducing all movement rates by half. Deep grooves are cut into the granite around the hole, as if some enormous creature tried to claw its way inside.

The bones lining the muddy pool are the remains of the thousands of creatures Stygoth has eaten over the years. The innocuous hole is the entrance to Stygoth’s lair. The black dragon would use his magic circlet (area S-5) to gain entrance to the caves, but he lost the circlet in a fit of Blight-induced madness and has been unable to enter his lair since. He has tried repeatedly to claw his way inside and failed. The disease-corrupted dragon refuses to leave his beloved treasure, but can’t puzzle a way to get back inside.

Only four inches wide, this small tunnel is far too narrow for PCs. Even familiars might have trouble

negotiating its tight confines. Characters employing the magic circlet, however, will have no trouble at all.

Area S-7A – The Lost Trove: Read or paraphrase the following:

Your breath catches as the true contents of the muddy cavern become clear. Thousands of coins, gold and silver, spill into the light. Faceted gems sparkle and dance before your eyes, and the gentle luminescence of magic shines from the furthest reaches of the cave.

The Treasure: Stygoth’s trove is lovingly arranged inside, but the treasure is covered in cobwebs and mold. Brave adventurers will discover 14,500 sp, 3,200 gp, 16 sapphires (worth 20 gp each), 11 emeralds (worth 30 gp each), 5 rubies (worth 75 gp each), +1 *large shield of spell resistance* (13), +1 *dwarven waraxe*, a *ring of counterspells*, 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (CL 6), and a *lesser strand of prayer beads*.

Getting the treasure *out* is another matter altogether. Moreover, for every 5 rounds the characters spend here, roll 1d10. On a 1, Stygoth returns. Fortunately for any would be robbers, the madness that haunts the dragon will also make him leave unexpectedly after only 1d6 rounds.

The Corpse: At the back of the cave (Search DC 10) is a dried, shriveled corpse. When Stygoth contracted the Blight, he captured a human priest and brought the poor soul back to his lair, hoping the human could cure him. The priest made some progress, temporarily staving off the Blight, but when Stygoth lost his magic circlet, the priest was left to slowly starve to death.

The corpse clutches a scroll in its desiccated fists. In his final hours, the priest penned the following:

Many days now have passed since last I saw the dragon. I prayed for the dragon to die, and it seems, cruelly, my wish has been granted. Faith alone sustains me, along with the belief that my death shall not be in vain.

This much our research has shown; the disease putrefies the living. There is something in the water, born from the mines bored into the earth to the east. But the swamp cannot produce such vile corruption on its own. The devil-born lizardfolk, perhaps? The dragon has whispered ancient ballads in its sleep, songs of demons and savage kings. The demon and the profane taint – they must be related. My last regret is that I will not live to see them both destroyed

Level 1: The Forge

Built atop a small island in the Great Swamp, the Forge is a crude, temporary fortress. A dense cloud of soot issues from the fort day and night, coating the surrounding swamp with cinders and ash. Long before the fortress can be seen, it can be heard: an endless clanging and crashing of tortured metal, mixed with the screams of dying slaves as they are sacrificed to the Maw.

The Forge's sole purpose is the production of Blight Blades. Tainted earth is mined from the Maw (area 1-10), then forged into weapons (area 1-5). Supply trains sent by the Mountain King arrive once a week, bearing slaves, food and sometimes gold. (This was the caravan the party encountered with Stygoth.) The Forge can hold out for two weeks at half rations if the supply chain is broken.

In case of an assault, battle-ready troops rally before Graah (area 1-5), who directs the counter assault. Lady Kyleth (area 1-11G) directs the remaining troops as they become available, casting support spells from a distance and watching for diversions and second waves. If it becomes clear that the Forge will fall, she prepares for her own escape, abandoning the Forge and her followers.

Walls: The walls of the Forge are built from stout timbers brought down from the mountains. The walls are actually two matching walls, with rock and earth filling the cavity between them. The walls are effectively 8' thick and twice as tall. The wet swamp air makes the timbers especially resistant to fire; the timbers will rot out in a year or two, but Kyleth will be long gone by then. The walls are resistant to the first 50 points of fire damage.

Walls: 8 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 600; Break DC 40; Climb DC 20.

Wandering Monsters

Check for guards once every half hour. Roll a d6; on a 1 the PCs' location is inspected by a guard patrol of 1 gnoll and 10 kobolds. If the characters are discovered, the guards will try to capture them, raising an alarm if the PCs prove too powerful.

Gnoll: CR 1; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk Battleaxe +3 melee (1d8+2/x3) or shortbow +1 ranged (1d6/x3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +3; Power Attack.

Possessions: Battleaxe, leather armor, steel shield, shortbow and 20 arrows.

Kobold (10): CR 1/4; Small Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 4; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp -4; Atk/Full Atk Spear +1 melee (1d6-1/x3) or sling +3 ranged (1d3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8

Skills and Feats: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Profession (miner) +2, Search +2, Spot +2; Alertness.

Possessions: Halfspear, leather armor, sling and bullets.

Areas of the Map

Area 1-1 – Gatehouse (EL 7): Read or paraphrase the following:

Twenty feet tall and flanked by a pair of gangly stick-towers, the gatehouse stands resolutely in the mist. Snarling figures stalk the parapets, before flaming braziers belching clouds of thick black smoke. Smaller figures crouch atop the towers, peering warily through the dim light.

Three kobolds sit in each tower, and 5 gnolls and 3 kobolds wait atop the gatehouse. They are on constant watch, wary of an attack by Stygoth. If they spot intruders, they will sound a horn alerting the rest of the Forge. If the horn is sounded a second time, it signals that the Forge is under attack.

The gate is built from the same timbers that make up the wall. It takes Graah and a team of 30 kobolds ten minutes to drag it into place. The gate is only opened on Lady Kyleth's order.

Tactics: If characters rush the gatehouse, the defenders respond by tipping the braziers, pouring flaming oil atop attackers. The braziers are awkward to aim (-2 to attack) but inflict 4d6 points of damage (Reflex save DC 15 for half) to those unfortunate enough to be struck by streams of flaming oil, and 1d6 splash damage to those within 5 ft. (Reflex save DC 16 for none). The oil burns for 2 rounds, dealing 1d4 points of damage per round. There are 3 braziers atop the gatehouse and each can be decanted 3 times before the oil has to be refilled.

The gate, gatehouse, and walls are resistant to the first 50 points of fire damage; even if the braziers are dumped on the gatehouse, the sodden wood will only smolder, hiss and spit.

Gnolls (5): CR 1; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk Battleaxe

+3 melee (1d8+2/x3) or shortbow +1 ranged (1d6/x3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +3; Power Attack.

Possessions: Battleaxe, leather armor, steel shield, shortbow and 20 arrows.

Kobolds (9): CR 1/4; Small Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 4; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp -4; Atk/Full Atk Spear +1 melee (1d6-1/x3) or sling +3 ranged (1d3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Profession (miner) +2, Search +2, Spot +2; Alertness.

Possessions: Halfspear, leather armor, sling and bullets.

Area 1-2 – Watch Platform (EL 1): Each tower marked 2 is the same. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs approach one:

The watchtower rises out of the mist like a spindly-legged spider, no more than a platform supported by three tall timbers. The tower is decorated with skulls strung on ropes like beads and tattered war banners spattered with dried gore. The banners all share the same sigil: a blood-red skull.

The tower is 40 ft. tall, and occupied by 3 kobolds that constantly scan the surrounding swamp. If they spot anything suspicious, they sound their horn, alerting the Forge. The kobolds will fire their slings from the platforms, but they hit the deck as soon as attacks are concentrated against them.

Kobold (3): CR 1/4; Small Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 4; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp -4; Atk/Full Atk Spear +1 melee (1d6-1/x3) or sling +3 ranged (1d3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Profession (miner) +2, Search +2, Spot +2; Alertness.

Possessions: Halfspear, leather armor, sling and bullets.

Area 1-3 – Slave Pit: Read or paraphrase the following:

A short, spiked wall surrounds this deep pit. Gaunt humans, elves and dwarves squat in the mud below. The slaves are clothed in bloody rags, and all bear wounds of some sort. A few call out weakly, but the majority are too broken in body and spirit to even hope for rescue.

Each slave pit houses 1d12 humans, 1d6 elves and 1d4 dwarves, their numbers dwindling as Lady Kyleth sacrifices them to aggravate the Blight. Those with experience as warriors have had their thumbs cut off so that they can no longer wield weapons. Those who are suspected spell casters have been blinded. All have been brought to the brink of death by starvation and dehydration; Lady Kyleth doesn't bother to feed or water her charges. Those that survive do so by digging pits in the muddy waste to capture rainwater, and eating the corpses of their fellows that die before Lady Kyleth decides to sacrifice them.

These are truly squalid conditions. With no one to remove the bodies of the dead, the corpses are either eaten or trampled into the mud, where they slowly rot. None of these slaves can aid the party in any way, although good-aligned characters may find themselves honor bound to rescue the dying slaves.

Treasure: If characters take the time to search the pit with magic or exhaustive physical means (Search DC 25), there is a slim chance they will discover the following items: 2d20 gp, 2d20 sp, 1 blue quartz (8 gp value), and 3 pearls (worth 130 gp each).

Area 1-4 – Warehouse (EL 3): Both doors to this building are bound in iron and secured with a complex lock (hardness 8; hp 20; Break DC 23; Open Lock DC 25). The northern door is protected with a *burning hands* trap; the pass phrase, "Cleansed by silver fire," is known by Graah and Lady Kyleth, but only the witch carries a key to the lock.

Once entered, read or paraphrase the following:

The darkened room is filled from ceiling to floor with crates, barrels, and casks. Each container is sealed in wax with the stamp of a wickedly-spiked crown looming over a mountain.

These are all the supplies the Forge will require for the next two weeks. There are dried foodstuffs, replacement weapons and tools for the gnolls and kobolds, casks of cheap wine, barrels of oil, and a variety of other low-quality goods supplied by the Mountain King. Taken together, the supplies will fill a wagon, and are worth a total of 350 gp, but characters will have trouble finding buyers as long as the crates bear the mark of the Mountain King.

Burning Hands Trap: CR 3; magic device, touch trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*burning hands*, 5th-level wizard; 5d4 fire, DC 11 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 26; Disable Device 26.

Area 1-5 – Forge (EL 7): Read or paraphrase the following:

This enormous building is a huge forge. Smoke pours from the central stack, along with the incessant ring of hammers striking anvils. Soot and cinders cover the ground, and the air is laden with heat and the smell of slag and dross. Inside, a mighty ogre labors over a glowing rod of metal, hammering it into shape, while 5 sooty kobolds work the bellows.

As soon as the kobolds catch sight of the party they will begin yap and jabber, alerting Graah. Graah is smart enough to know that if characters have made it this far, they must mean serious trouble, and the ogre will waste no time leaping to the offense.

The forge is built better than most of the other buildings in the compound. Tools for weapon and armor smithing hang on the walls, and three carts of unrefined ore stand by the door. The kobolds labor here, working the bellows, feeding ore into the furnace, decanting the slag, and casting the refined Blight into long rods. Graah oversees their work and hammers the rods of refined Blight into blades. The blades that don't survive the process are kept for sale to necromancers and sages that would study the Blight. The blades that Graah declares acceptable are passed along to the goblin Backra (area 1-10) to be hung on pommels and sharpened.

Development: Neither Graah nor the kobolds plan to make their stand here. Upon sighting the characters, Graah hurls his hammer and barks orders at the kobolds to dump the furnace out onto the floor, spilling out molten Blight. The slag does 1d12 points of damage to characters caught in the spill (Reflex save DC 15 negates) and makes it impossible to fight Graah and the kobolds without crossing the flaming moat. The slag continues to flame for 10 rounds, and to deal damage for 20. The kobolds scramble into the rafters and onto the roof, while Graah retreats outside the forge to raise the alarm and properly prepare for battle.

If Graah is able to return to his chambers (area 1-11D), don his spiked half-plate, and take up his +1 *thundering greatsword*, his already fearsome (below) statistics change as follows:

Graah with Equipment: AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 24; Atk/Full Atk +1 *thundering greatsword* +11 melee (3d6+8/19-20 plus 1d8 plus deafness) or spiked armor +14 grapple (1d4+1d6+5).

Treasure: Seven unfinished rods of Blight are cooling in their casts, 4 shattered blades lie in a bin, and 2 finished Blight Blades rest on a sheepskin in the corner. Selling the Blight is an evil act, yet highly

profitable. The rods of Blight will command 500 gp each, and even the shattered blades are worth 400 gp if sold together. The finished Blight blades (one glaive, one bastard sword) are worth 808 gp and 835 gp respectively (see page 34).

Graah, Ogre Ftr2/Exp1: CR 6; Large Giant; HD 4d8+2d10+1d6+21; hp 62; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +5; Grp +14; Atk/Full Atk flaming rod +10 melee (2d6+1d6) or large hammer +6 ranged (1d8+5/x3); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 21, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Craft (armorsmithing) +6, Craft (weaponsmithing) +2, Listen +2, Spot +2; Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Great Sword).

Possessions: molten rod, huge hammer, chain shirt, large gauntlets of improved fire resistance, large bracers of armor +3.

Kobold (5): CR 1/4; Small Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 6; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp -4; Atk/Full Atk Spear +1 melee (1d6-1/x3) or sling +3 ranged (1d3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Profession (miner) +2, Search +2, Spot +2; Alertness.

Possessions: Halfspear, leather armor, sling and bullets.

Area 1-6 – Gnoll Great Hall (EL 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

The great hall has been utterly destroyed by savage revels. Bones and scraps of rotting meat are piled in the corners and the entire place is carpeted in filth. Corpses have been pinned on the wall, used for target practice, and never taken down. Snarling figures lounge in the shadows at the back of the hall.

This is where the gnolls make their home. Five gnolls are lounging here on beds of matted hides, passing the time gambling and tormenting the occasional lone kobold. The gnolls are used to having the run of the Forge and will savagely attack anyone that dares to enter their great hall.

The gnolls hide their treasure beneath one of the matted beds (Search DC 20 to find). Their full stash of loot is concealed in a den in the wilds, but kept here in loose bags are: 256 gp, 788 sp, 3 small rubies (worth 60 gp each), and 1 unicorn horn (a touch of the horn to an open wound casts *cure light wounds* (CL 3) twice per day). The cunning young witch, Maeve, has learned of the location of the gnolls' wilderness treasure horde and concealed a



map with directions in her study (area 1-11F).

Development: If the gnolls have time to don armor before combat, their AC improves to 15.

Gnolls (5): CR 1; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 14; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk Battleaxe +3 melee (1d8+2/x3) or shortbow +1 ranged (1d6/x3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +3; Power Attack.

Possessions: Battleaxe, leather armor, steel shield, shortbow and 20 arrows.

Area 1-7 – Kobold Barracks (EL 7): Read or paraphrase the following:

Moldy hay and rotting skins cover the floor of these barracks. Ragged hammocks and torn war banners hang from water-stained rafters. A rusty cauldron hangs over a smoldering fire pit in the center of the room. Many pairs of eyes lurk in the shadows, flashing angrily.

Thirty kobolds lurk in the barracks, digging marrow from bones, sharpening shivs, and crafting plots against the gnolls that terrorize them. The kobolds are led by Torgo the Eye Gouger, an exceptionally

cunning coward, even by kobold standards. Torgo doesn't care to be a leader, but it is the only way he can have a hand in deciding whether or not he gets beaten up by the gnolls. If Graah is slain or it is clear that the PCs will carry the day, Torgo will attempt to flee the Forge, with or without his charges.

The kobolds have no treasure. The gnolls have taken it all by threat and guile.

Torgo the Eye Gouger, kobold War1/Ftr1/Rog1: CR 3; Small Humanoid; HD 1d8+1d10+1d6+3; hp 21; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp -3; Atk/Full Atk masterwork shiv +3 melee (1d4-1) or light crossbow +4 ranged (1d8-1/19-20); SQ light sensitivity, sneak attack +1d6, trapfinding; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will 0; Str 9, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Craft +2, Hide +8, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Spot +6; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Stealthy.

Possessions: Leather armor, light crossbow, 2 matched masterwork shivs.

Kobold (30): CR 1/4; Small Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 6; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp -4; Atk/Full Atk halfspear +1 melee (1d6-1/x3) or sling +3 ranged (1d3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Profession (miner) +2, Search +2, Spot +2; Alertness.

Possessions: Halfspear, leather armor, sling and bullets.

Area 1-8 – Mining Lift and Turnstile (EL 3): Read or paraphrase the following:

Heavy, roughhewn scaffolding stretches out over the ravine. Thick ropes run to a lift and a wide turnstile that spools the lift up and down. A sleepy-eyed gnoll and 5 kobolds stand guard.

The rope can take 15 hit points of damage before being severed. It is a 60 ft. fall to the ravine floor, area 1-10. The lift takes 3 minutes to lower safely, and twice as long to raise.

Gnoll: CR 1; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 16; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk Battleaxe +3 melee (1d8+2/x3) or shortbow +1 ranged (1d6/x3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +3; Power Attack.

Possessions: Battleaxe, leather armor, steel shield, shortbow and 20 arrows.

Kobold (5): CR 1/4; Small Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 6 each; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp -4; Atk/Full Atk halfspear +1 melee (1d6-1/x3) or sling +3 ranged (1d3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Profession (miner) +2, Search +2, Spot +2; Alertness.

Possessions: Halfspear, leather armor, sling and bullets.

Area 1-9 – Sacrificial Platform: Read or paraphrase the following:

A thickly built platform arches out over the ravine. The beams are sticky with gore caked atop gore. Two pairs of matched manacles are pinned to the railing with brutal nails. Several wicked bloodletting tools hang nearby, sheathed in sleeves of flayed skin. An evil wind wafts up from below. It is impossible to guess how many terrible deeds have taken place atop this wicked platform.

This is where Kyleth performs her daily tortures and slayings. She kills at least two prisoners a day, bleeding them dry before cutting the bodies free, letting them plummet into the depths of the Maw.

The 7 bloodletting tools are cruel implements made of sharpened iron. Designed by Graah and perfected by Backra, each was created to eviscerate a specific organ of the body without damaging the surrounding tissue. They are worth 15 gp apiece to collectors, or 210 gp if sold as a set. In combat, they serve as small exotic masterwork weapons (1d3+1/x3; 1 lb.; piercing).

From atop the platform it is a 70 ft. drop to the hard, rocky floor of the Maw. Two successful opposed grappling checks will allow a grappler to pitch her opponent over the railing.

Area 1-10 – The Maw (EL 3): Read or paraphrase the following:

The gaping ravine runs from north to south, an unnatural, weeping wound cut into the heart of the swamp. The sides are steep and rocky, the floor cloaked in swirling mist. A warm, wet heat pulses from below like a living rot.

This deep ravine is the site of the original vein of Blight. This is where the curse began; to lift the curse the party should retrieve the demon skull (area 2-20) and cast it into the Maw. See Return to the Forge (page 33) for the conclusion.

Paladins, good-aligned clerics, and druids coming within 20 ft. of the Maw are filled with a powerful unease. It is not danger they sense, but an overwhelming sickness. The spirit of the land here is wracked with pain and torment. Any attempts to commune with the land, or mend the spiritual wound by any means, triggers a dramatic reaction. At the GM's discretion, this reaction can occur simply by having a good-aligned character come near the Maw; this may help steer the party in the right direction if they don't otherwise trigger it.

First, the one who triggered the response has a vision that leaves him incapacitated for 1d4 rounds:

The world vanishes as you pitch toward the rotting black Maw. An instant later you are standing on an icy battlefield, hundreds of barbarians around you, each charging to their death. A massive black demon erupts from the ground, slaughtering dozens with each swing of his mighty arms. You take up arms and join them, a raging war cry filling your lungs and thrilling your blood. The battle rages on for hours, and finally the demon falls, brought low by a young warrior.

Only a few dozen barbarians have survived. They bear the mortally wounded warrior and the demon's skull towards the cliffs to the west. Night falls, and soon only you remain. At your feet, where the demon fell, is a dark sliver of earth that stinks of rotting meat.

Second, a tormented earth elemental bursts from the ground, blindly lashing out at those who would salve its pain. If adventurers are foolish enough to remain near the ravine, the maddened elemental attempts to bull rush the PCs over the edge. It is a 60 ft. fall to the base of the ravine. The walls of the Maw are slick with acrid condensation, impairing what would otherwise be an easy climb (DC 25).

If the PCs move more than 20 ft. from the ravine, the elemental sinks back into the earth. The elemental is disturbed by the presence of the adventurers, but has grown used to the Witch Queen and her servants, and so does not disturb them.

Earth Elemental: CR 3; Medium Elemental (Earth, Extraplanar); HD 4d8+12; hp 30; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +3; Grp +8; Atk/Full Atk Slam +8 melee (1d8+7); SA Earth mastery, push; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., earth glide, elemental traits; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11

Skills and Feats: Listen +4, Spot +3; Cleave, Power Attack.

Earth Mastery (Ex): An earth elemental gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls if both it and its foe are touching the ground. If an opponent is airborne or waterborne, the elemental takes a -4 penalty on attack and damage rolls.

Push (Ex): An earth elemental can start a bull rush maneuver without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Earth Glide (Ex): An earth elemental can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any other sort of earth except metal. A *move earth* spell cast on an area containing a burrowing earth elemental flings the elemental back 30 feet, stunning the creature for 1 round unless it succeeds on a DC 15 Fortitude save.

Area 1-10A – Mining Crew (EL 4): Read or paraphrase the following:

At the base of the ravine, a small mob of weary kobolds hews at the rock wall with picks and hammers. A barking gnoll urges them on. Condensation cloaks the walls and a coarse, gritty grime covers everything else.

Ten kobolds labor here. All ten have contracted low-grade cases of the Blight. PCs investigating the kobolds (Search DC 15) notice that the kobolds bear dark stains that give off feverish heat, even after the kobolds are dead. These stains are where the kobolds have begun to rot. This may show up in combat as well; bludgeoning blows that do more than 5 points of damage will blast bits of rot from the kobolds.

Development: If the kobolds are given adequate warning, they don their leather armor, improving their AC to 15. If the alarm goes up, this chamber will be deserted, the kobolds sent to the surface to defend the Forge from invaders.

Gnoll: CR 1; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 16; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk Battleaxe +3 melee (1d8+2/x3) or shortbow +1 ranged (1d6/x3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +3; Power Attack.

Possessions: Battleaxe, leather armor, steel shield, shortbow and 20 arrows.

Kobold (10): CR 1/4; Small Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 4; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +1; Grp -4; Atk/Full Atk halfspear +1 melee (1d6-1/x3) or sling +3 ranged (1d3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Craft (trapmaking) +2, Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Profession (miner)

+2, Search +2, Spot +2; Alertness.

Possessions: Halfspear, leather armor, sling and bullets.

Area 1-11 – Lair of the Witch Queen (EL 3): Read or paraphrase the following:

This squat building is built without windows and has but a single stout door. Heavy, reinforced timbers make up the walls and roof, and the door is bound with closely fitted iron straps. A trio of well-armed gnolls guard the door, fangs bared and blades at the ready.

These gnolls were hand-picked by Kyleth to guard her domicile. They have been tasked not to leave the door upon pain of death, but if violence erupts within sight of them, they will leap into the melee, unable to deny their chaotic natures.

The door is exceptionally thick and barred from the inside. Thus it cannot be picked, but can be broken with a successful Strength check (DC 25). The door can also be chopped down, but this will alert those inside, giving them time to coordinate their defense.

The only other entrance to the building is the grated chimney fed from the fireplace in area 1-11B, but the chimney is only six inches wide.

Ironbound door: 6" thick; hardness 5; 40 hp; Break DC 28.

Gnoll (3): CR 1; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8+2; hp 18 each; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk Battleaxe +3 melee (1d8+2/x3) or shortbow +1 ranged (1d6/x3); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +3; Power Attack.

Possessions: Battleaxe, chain mail, heavy steel shield, short bow and 20 arrows.

Area 1-11A – Demonic Foyer (EL 3, 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

The small antechamber is lavishly decorated with demonic frescoes and a torrid rug depicting demonic acts. Twin ironwood gorgons form the archway to the south, their fierce maws locked in combat.

The rug conceals a vault hidden in the floor. The vault is protected by a deadly trap that punches several blades up through the floor. Opening the trapdoor without giving the pull-ring three clockwise rotations triggers the trap.

The trapdoor opens into a recessed vault. Four long iron boxes occupy one third of the vault. These hold finished Blight Blades awaiting the next orc cara-

van: 6 long swords, 4 glaives, and a single greatsword. Selling the Blight Blades is an evil act (see page 34 for more information).

The rest of the vault is occupied by 4 locked iron chests. The chests are identical except for their locks: one depicts a goblin head, another a demon, another a dragon, and the last a screaming man with his eyes sewn shut. The locks are all of good quality (DC 25 to pick). Lady Kyleth (area 1-13E) carries a ring with keys to all 4 chests.

Goblin Chest: This chest is trapped (Search DC 25 to detect) with a vial of one of Kyleth's more wicked creations: *zombifying gas*. Opening the chest crushes the vial, instantly dissipating gas throughout the room. All those within a 5 ft. radius must make Fortitude saves (DC 18) or drop to the floor, seemingly dead, only to rise up the next round as faux-dead, lashing out at the nearest living creature. The madness lasts for 20 rounds, minus the victim's Constitution, or until a *cure wounds* spell is cast upon the victim, they are knocked unconscious, or they are killed.

The chest is empty.

Demon Chest: The eyes of the demonic face on this chest pulse red. This chest holds 10 rods of highly refined gold. Each is worth 100 gp by weight.

Dragon Chest: This chest holds 50 uncut bloodstones, worth 20 gp each.

Screaming Victim Chest: This chest contains Kyleth and Graah's masterwork: the *Blighted Helm*. The helmet is wrought entirely of the dark, metallic Blight and has no visor. It would seem that anyone donning the helmet would be blind. This is true, but not in the traditional sense. See **Appendix I: New Magic** for a full description of the *Helm*.

Floor Blade Trap: CR 3; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; targets person opening trap door; Atk +15 melee (1d12+8x3); Search DC 15; Disable Device 27.

Zombifying Gas Trap: CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger; no reset; spell effect (*zombifying gas*, DC 18 Will negates); multiple targets (strikes all creatures within a 5 ft. radius); Search DC 25; Disable Device 19.

Area 1-11B – Kitchen: Read or paraphrase the following:

Cupboards and shelves, stuffed to bursting, cover the walls of this room. Dried fruits and jerky, spices of every sort, sweetmeats and more fill every available space. A small fireplace occupies the south wall.

This room houses a surprising variety of foodstuffs, herbs and spices. Kyleth, Graah and Backra have

divergent tastes, so nearly anyone can find something appetizing here.

Area 1-11C – Graah's Chamber: Read or paraphrase the following:

This spartan room holds a single enormous bedroll, traveling equipment, and a collection of scrolls hung from a wall rack. A massive greatsword and equally large suit of half-plate armor rest on wooden stands in the corner of the room.

This is where Graah passes his time when he is not working in the forge or practicing his swordsmanship. If Graah has had a chance to retreat to this room, the armor and sword will be gone. The sword is a +1 *thundering greatsword*. The spiked half-plate has no magical properties.

Graah takes his pay in gems. A small teak box is hidden beneath the largest flagstone in the floor (Search DC 15). A mighty Strength check (DC 30) is required to lift the flagstone. Up to 3 PCs may aid each other in the check. (Graah uses the leverage of a special hook he keeps in the forge.) Alternately, the flagstone can be broken; it has a hardness of 8 and 30 hit points. Inside the box are a collection of twenty-two small gems worth a combined total of 1,350 gp.

The scrolls are studies in exotic armor and weapon making. The scrolls are worth 500 gp to innovative weaponsmiths; to the common blacksmith they are useless. To Graah, the scrolls are the culmination of a life of study and research; they are priceless to the ogre, and he will go to any length to recover them.

Area 1-11D – Backra's Workshop (EL 6): Read or paraphrase the following:

This dark workshop is filled with supplies for sharpening and hanging weapons. Black leather cord, eel and shark skin, ironwood staves, pommels and scabbards cover the walls and shelves; a single grinding wheel dominates the center of the room.

If the characters have succeeded in entering the building by stealth or guile, Backra will be here working on his latest deadly creation. Otherwise he will have joined Kyleth in area 1-11E.

Backra is a nasty little hunchbacked goblin. Dirty, unstable and cruel, he is also probably the best non-elf weapon sharpener within 100 leagues. Any character with skills in weaponsmithing will recognize his name as the one responsible for the deadliest weapons ever to be placed in the hands of evil humanoids.

Aside from his possessions, Backra's only treasure is easily passed over; he keeps a small bag of powdered Blight, the byproduct of sharpening the Blight blades. If Backra is threatened he will hurl the bag into the air, spilling a cloud of noxious corruption through the room. Anyone within 15 feet must make an immediate Fort save (DC 15) or contract the Blight in the next 1d3 days.

Backra, goblin Clr2/Sor2/Exp2: CR 6; Small Humanoid; HD 2d8+2d4+2d6-6; hp 34; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +3; Grp -2; Atk/Full Atk +1 *morningstar of venom* +4 melee (1d8); SQ turn and rebuke undead, summon familiar; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 9, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Craft (weaponsmithing) +12, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (anatomy) +7, Torture +8, Spellcraft +7; Alertness, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/5; save DC 12 + spell level): 0 – *acid splash*, *daze*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st – *magic missile*, *summon monster I*.

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/4; save DC 11 + spell level): 0 – *mending*, *resistance*, *virtue*; 1st – *entropic shield*, *inflict light wounds**, *summon monster I* (x2). *Domain spell.

Domains: Destruction, Evil.

Possessions: *bag of powdered Blight*, Small +1 chain shirt, *horn ring fetish* (+3 to one attack, see page 35), +1 *morningstar of venom*, *divine scroll* (CL 3rd; *inflict serious wounds*, *remove curse*, *summon monster III*).

Area 1-11E – Witch Queen's Chamber (EL 2, 5):

Read or paraphrase the following:

This room houses a single bed, a chair and desk, and an ornate locked chest covered with sigils that pulse with a soft blue light.

This is where Kyleth makes her home, but there is little evidence of the Witch Queen here. She is far too meticulous and paranoid for that. The Queen will make her stand in her laboratory (area 1-11G).

The Chest: What PCs will find here is a red herring: the sigils on the glowing chest do nothing but glow, and the chest's lock has been carefully broken so that it cannot be unlocked. Despite this, a poison needle is still set to prick anyone who tries to pick the lock.

Worse, if the chest is handled roughly, broken open, or dropped by an unconscious thief, the chest's second trap will be triggered, crushing a vial of *zombifying gas*. All those within a 5' radius must make Fortitude saves (DC 18) or drop to the floor, seemingly dead, only to rise up the next round as

faux-undead, lashing out at the nearest living creature. The madness lasts for 20 rounds, minus the victim's Constitution, or until a *cure wounds* spell is cast upon the victim, they are knocked unconscious, or they are killed.

Apart from the vial of *zombifying gas*, the chest is empty.

The Desk: Atop the desk are 5 pages of vellum, an unfinished letter from Kyleth to the Mountain King. Give out players handout C. The letter reads:

My Darksome Love –

The Blight continues to grow. Your fears are unfounded; the land can not cure itself of this plague. Evil always begets evil.

There is one small matter. I suspect the initial cause of the Blight was an ancient demon prince, a spirit so profane that I dare not give it a name. Local lore suggests that the demon was slain by a barbarian warlord. If remnants of the demon still exist, and if they were ever returned to the Maw, I cannot predict what might result. I will take steps to ensure that the lizardfolk are unable to retrieve any remains from the barbarian tomb. Moreover, with very little effort I can be assured of

The rest of the letter is unfinished.

Poison Needle Trap: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; repair reset; Atk +17 melee (1 plus poison, needle); poison (blue whinnis, DC 14 Fort save resists poison only, 1 Con/unconsciousness); Search DC 22; Disable Device 17.

Zombifying Gas Trap: CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger; no reset; spell effect (*zombifying gas*, DC 18 Will negates); multiple targets (strikes all creatures within a 5' radius); Search DC 25; Disable Device 19.

Area 1-11F – Apprentice's Study (EL 3): Read or paraphrase the following:

This room reflects gentler sensibilities than the others in this forsaken place. The air is scented with flowers, and a flickering lantern sits atop a low writing desk. A small but comfortable cot occupies the far corner. The walls are covered in voluminous tapestries embroidered with eldritch runes and sigils.

This is the home of Maeve, Kyleth's apprentice and disciple. Unless the PCs have made it this far without creating a stir, Maeve will have heard their approach, successfully applied wight oil poison to her weapons, cast *mage armor* upon herself, and hidden in the shadows by the door. She is aware of

the effects of the *zombifying gas* and won't launch a flanking sneak attack (augmented by *true strike*) unless she hears PCs attacking each other or the PCs enter her chamber.

Treasure: Maeve has been denied a share of treasure as part of her apprenticeship, but the cunning young witch has paid close attention to the gnolls of the Forge, noting where they hide their loot in the swamp. She has embroidered crude directions and landmarks into her tapestry, which amounts to a rough map. A successful Decipher Script check (DC 25) will reveal the location of the treasure horde. The recovery of the horde can be an adventure in itself.

Maeve, human Sor2/Rog1: CR 3; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d4+1d6+9; hp 22; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +1; Grp +0; Full Atk/Atk short sword +0 melee (1d6-1/19-20) or heavy crossbow +3 ranged (1d10/19-20); SQ summon familiar, sneak attack +1d6, trapfinding; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 8, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9, Hide +8, Listen +5, Move Silently +8; Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse (short sword).

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/5; save DC 13 + spell level): 0 – *daze, flare, mage hand, message, read magic*; 1st – *mage armor, true strike*.

Possessions: heavy crossbow, leather armor, short sword, vial with 3 doses of distilled wight oil (Injury DC 15, 1d12 hp/1d8 Str), lucky stone fetish (+3 to one attack, see page 35).

Area 1-11G – Kyleth's Laboratory (EL 7): Read or paraphrase the following:

This laboratory is a chaotic rat's nest of desiccated corpses, glowing globes filled with wafting vapors, drying herbs and noxious leaves, bloody scalpels and brainrakes, shrunk heads of every race, stacks of musty tomes and shelves of scrolls. The center of the room is dominated by a massive dark cauldron, boiling over with a gruesome stew of eyeballs and bubbling green ichor.

If the PCs have succeeded in making it this far without causing a disturbance, the Witch Queen Kyleth will be here studying a dead kobold, with Loki, a demonic liaison, crouched on her shoulder.

If the PCs have given Kyleth warning of their approach, they will be in for a fight. Kyleth will have cast *mage armor* for herself and Loki, and prepared a *summon monster* spell. Loki will have readied several vials of acid for throwing (grenade-like weapon, direct hit 1d6 points of damage, splash 1 point of

Lady Kyleth, the Witch Queen

A slender half-elf with sharp features, midnight hair and icy blue eyes, Kyleth spent her childhood happily playing in the sun-dappled Sylvan Downs. Her sheltered life ended the night orc raiders sacked her village and set fire to the Downs, carrying away Kyleth to the halls of the Mountain King. But while the other slaves weakened and died, Kyleth grew hard, learning to rely on hate and anger to sustain her.

A blossoming young maid, Kyleth was chosen to attend the Mountain King. When he tried to force himself on her, Kyleth's eldritch powers manifested with devastating force. No one knows what foul deals were struck, but when the fearful guards pulled open the smoking doors, the Mountain King had lost an eye and gained a powerful sorceress ally.

Now Kyleth serves the Mountain King of her own free will. She watches the lands surrounding their mountain fastness, going where orcs and goblins can't, secretly mingling with the races of good. Acquiring experience, information and more power, she serves as the secret hand of the Mountain King, providing strategic intelligence for the orc hordes.

PCs will find Kyleth to be a challenging foe. She has lost everything before, and is not afraid of ceding the battlefield if it means she can return to power later. With the aid of the *Ars Maleficus*, Kyleth can even return from the dead. Whispers hint that she and the Mountain King are lovers, but if the King loves Kyleth, the Witch Queen lusts after only his power. One day soon it will be Kyleth ruling over the fabled mountain fastness, and when she does the King's head will swing from the wind-swept battlements.

Kyleth wears becoming black dresses fitted to her slim frame, and is often accompanied by Loki, a liaison sent by the Dark Powers. Above all else Kyleth wants to be envied and feared. If there is ever a chance to snare more power or sorcerous strength, Kyleth will be there, bolstered by the legions of her lover's armies.

damage). Kyleth and her minions will wait for sounds of combat from the adjoining chambers, or for the PCs to enter her laboratory.

Tactics: In combat Kyleth relies on her wand, using spells when appropriate. Loki will lob vials of acid at the PCs (he has a store of 10 available). The laboratory is crowded with worktables, shelves and the cauldron, so PCs will have to fight past the summoned monsters to get at the witch and her familiar.

Kyleth is dangerously pragmatic villain, intensely calm in the heat of battle. She realizes that if the PCs

have made it this far, odds are slim that she will be able to beat them in close combat. If either she or her Loki take more than half their hit points in damage, the pair will flee. Loki will attempt to take the *Ars Maleficus* with him, and Kyleth will follow, fleeing through the secret door to area 1-11A.

Kyleth has made preparations for her demise. If PCs capture the tome and study it, they will find her *arcane mark* inscribed on the last page. This image will slowly fade over the course of the next month as Kyleth is resurrected (see page 34 for details). How quickly Kyleth returns to power depends entirely on whether or not the PCs capture the *Ars Maleficus*.

Treasure: There is a wealth of knowledge here, but it is largely valuable only to dark sages, necromancers, witches and warlocks. If an appropriate buyer can be found (an adventure in itself), and the laboratory can be transported safely, it could be sold for 15,000 gp. Taken in pieces, the laboratory and its collection of eldritch studies are incomprehensible and nearly worthless.

Kyleth, half-elf Sor6: CR 6; Medium Humanoid; HD 6d4+6; hp 24; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk masterwork shortspear +1 melee (1d6-2) or masterwork shortspear +6 ranged (1d6-2); SQ immune to sleep, summon familiar; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 7, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +7, Craft (alchemy) +4, Hide +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (nature) +3, Search +5, Spellcraft +11; Combat Casting, Craft Fetish, Leadership.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/6/4; save DC 13 + spell level): 0 – *acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *flare*, *mage hand*, *read magic*; 1st – *alarm*, *charm person*, *mage armor*, *protection from good*; 2nd – *scare*, *flaming sphere*; 3rd – *summon monster III*.

Possessions: *bracers of armor* +1, *ring of protection* +1, masterwork shortspear, *silver necklace with 3 fetishes* (+3 to one attack, +3 to one saving throw, +3 to one damage roll, see page 35), wand of magic missile (CL 3rd; 20 charges).

Loki, Quasit: CR 2; Tiny Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Evil); HD 3d8; hp 13; Init +7; Spd 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +3; Grp -6; Atk Claw +8 melee (1d3-1 plus poison); Full Atk 2 claws +8 melee (1d3-1 plus poison) and bite +3 melee (1d4-1); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA Poison, spell-like abilities; SQ Alternate form, damage reduction 5/cold iron or good, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, immunity to poison, resistance to fire 10, empathic link, share spells,





speak with master; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +0 (+2 acting), Hide +17, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (any one) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +9, Search +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +6; Alertness, Improved Evasion, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will – *detect good*, *detect magic*, *invisibility*; 1/day – *cause fear* (as the spell, except that its area is a 30-foot radius from the quasit, save DC 11). Caster level 6th. The save DCs are Charisma-based. Once per week Loki can use *commune* to ask six questions. The ability otherwise works as the spell (CL 12th).

SA – Alternate Form(Su): Loki can assume the forms of a bat or wolf at will as a standard action. This ability functions as a *polymorph* spell cast on itself (caster level 12th), except that Loki does not regain hit points for changing form. A quasit in alternate form loses its poison attack.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 13, initial damage 1d4 Dex, secondary damage 2d4 Dex. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Possessions: 10 flasks of acid.

Area 1-11H – Last Laugh (EL 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

This small closet space is encased entirely in steel. The smell of sulfur is strong here. A lever stands against the far wall.

Both the secret doors leading into and out of this corridor are one way, allowing creatures to pass only from 1-11G to 1-11A. The door from 1-11G also has a spring-lock permitting it to be barred as a free action. Both doors are hidden, and can be found with a DC 20 Search check, and broken with a DC 20 Strength check.

If Kyleth is given the opportunity to flee, she will dash inside the closet, spring the lock, then continue through to the outside.

The lever is a trick: pulling the lever triggers an 8d6 *fireball* (DC 16 Reflex save half damage) in the closet. Those outside the closet will hear a muffled blast, followed by the wafting scent of cooked flesh and the laughter of Kyleth if she is within earshot.

Secret Door (2): 2" thick; hardness 5; hp 20; Break DC 20.

Fireball Trap: CR 5; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*fireball*, 8d6, DC 14 reflex save half damage); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

Level 2: The Lair of the Lizardfolk

When the tribe of lizardfolk met the spirit of the demon Obitu-que, they were not much different from most lizardfolk tribes: only loosely organized, poorly equipped, and practicing the most rudimentary of tactics. That all changed when the demon prince began counseling their shamans through dreams. The lizardfolk abandoned their ancient religion and began worshipping Obitu-que, obeying his every whim.

In the dozens of generations since, the demon has bred the tribe, culling the weak and stupid, and tutored the lizardfolk in the use of weapons, armor and tactics. If nothing else, it is an enjoyable diversion for one who has lived for so long and expects to live forever.

Every lizardfolk in this area bears a *divine mark*, identical in every respect to the 0-level wizard spell *arcane mark*. Each mark takes the form of a black scar in the shape of five eyes burned onto the chest of the lizardfolk. These marks have been cast by the shaman (area 2-19) to mark the lizardfolk as beholden to the demon.

The lizardfolk make their home in an ancient temple of prehistoric origin. Much of the original structure has collapsed, and the temple itself presents a danger to adventurers. The original builders took pains to build uniform stone walls, eight foot high ceilings, and level floors. Additions made by the lizardfolk are much less regular; ceilings vary in height, floors are uneven, and corridors vary in width.

The lair is universally damp and moist. Mold covers nearly every surface not submerged in water. The floors are covered in 2-6 inches of mud. Most doors have long since rotted away; those shown on the map are made of hammered copper.

Copper Door: 2" thickness; Hardness 5; 45 hp; Break DC 26.

There are no wandering monsters in the lizardfolk lair. The unexceptional lizardfolk have the following statistics. Lizardfolk with unusual stats are presented in the area entries.

Common Lizardfolk: CR 1; Medium Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 2d8+2; hp 15; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk spiked club +2 melee (1d6+2) or javelin +1 ranged (1d6+1); Full Atk spiked club +2 melee (1d6+2) and bite +0 melee (1d4) or javelin +1 ranged (1d6+1); SQ Hold breath; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Jump +5, Swim +2; Multiattack.

Possessions: Spiked club, 3 javelins, large wooden shield.

Areas of the Map

Area 2-1 – Old Entrance (EL 4): Read or paraphrase the following:

An ornate archway has been hewn into the granite cliff. Faint hieroglyphics whisper of forgotten empires lost to the march of time. Beneath the arch a passageway plunges into darkness.

A successful Decipher Script check (DC 25) will reveal that the hieroglyphics on the arch read: *Lord Death kneels at the throne of the King.*

Astute PCs might note what is *missing*: any tracks. A DC 15 Spot or Search check, or a DC 10 Survival check, will show that nothing (living) has used this entrance for many years, so it is certainly not an entrance used by the lizardfolk.

Two shadows lurk just inside the archway, hidden in the alcoves of the roughhewn walls. The pair will wait until the party has passed, then launch a surprise attack on the rear guard.

Shadow (2): CR 3; Medium Undead (Incorporeal); HD 3d12; hp 29, 19; Init +2; Spd Fly 40 ft. (good) (8 squares); AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +1; Grp -; Atk/Full Atk Incorporeal touch +3 melee (1d6 Str); SA Create spawn, strength damage; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal traits, +2 turn resistance, undead traits; AL chaotic evil; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4; Str -, Dex 14, Con -, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +8*, Listen +7, Search +4, Spot +7; Alertness, Dodge. *A shadow gains a +4 racial bonus on Hide checks in areas of shadowy illumination. In brightly lit areas, it takes a -4 penalty on Hide checks.

SA—Create Spawn (Su): Any humanoid reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow becomes a shadow under the control of its killer within 1d4 rounds.

Area 2-1A – Blood Gate (EL 4): Read or paraphrase the following:

A mighty stone gate stands proudly against the wall of the cavern. Twice as tall as a man, and built of massive granite blocks, it seems improbable that such a portal could ever open. Two narrow holes, waist-high, appear at the center of the gate, ringed in beaten copper.

The initial impressions are correct: the Blood Gate is *not* intended to open. Sealed by the temple's builders many centuries ago, the gate now serves only as a deterrent to tomb robbers. PCs reaching

into the holes will discover an empty space behind the gate; the next instant a massive granite block drops down, shearing off anything reaching through the hole.

Even if the characters manage to open the gate (DC 35 Str check), all they find is a wall of rubble. This part of the temple collapsed centuries ago.

Blood Gate Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +20 melee (2d4+8/x4); Search DC 21; Disable Device 30.

Area 2-2 – Concealed Entrance (EL 4): A matted wall of reeds and mud covers this cave, but a thorough Search (DC 20) or the work of a competent tracker (Survival DC 15) will reveal the hidden entrance to the lizardfolk's lair.

Inside, PCs will discover:

A short passageway opens into a small, wet cave. The entire western side of the cave is taken up by a deep pool. Four lizardfolk hunters are preparing a meal, roasting a deer over glowing coals.

If the lizardfolk notice the adventurers they will snarl and leap for their javelins and spiked clubs. Three will make a stand, while the smallest will dive into the tunnel, in an attempt to warn the lizardfolk in area 2-4.

Lizardfolk (4): hp 14, 15, 16, 18; see stats above.

Area 2-3 – Log Bridge (EL 4): Read or paraphrase the following:

The watery tunnel wends its way into darkness. A log bridge floats in the water here, coated with dripping moss and mold. A filmy patina of oil floats atop the water, casting rainbows in the light.

The "log bridge" is actually a giant crocodile, raised by the lizardfolk and trained to attack strangers. Roll secret Spot checks for each character, opposed by the giant crocodile's Hide check. Due to skill, racial, and cover bonuses, the crocodile adds a total of +15 to its Hide checks.

If the crocodile succeeds in grabbing a victim, it will drag him into area 2-3A, where it will attempt to drown the poor soul in the deeper pool.

The patina of oil is the remnants of fish oil from area 2-4.

Giant Crocodile: CR 4; Huge Animal; HD 7d8+28; hp 59; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 16 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +5; Grp +21; Atk/Full Atk Bite +11 melee (2d8+12) or tail slap +11 melee (1d12+12);

Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab; SQ Hold breath, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 27, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Hide +15*, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +16; Alertness, Endurance, Skill Focus (Hide).

Area 2-3A – Lair of the Croc: Read or paraphrase the following:

A dark pool occupies the southern end of this chamber. The chamber's floor is carpeted in white bones that poke from the mud like macabre vegetation. The air is thick with the musty scent of reptile.

This is where the giant crocodile retires to eat its prey. The pool is 30' deep at its center. If the crocodile succeeds in grappling a PC it will dive for the base of the pool. Adventurers fighting to free their companion will have to do so underwater.

Most of the bones littering the room belong to deer, kobolds and orcs. The treasure of the crocodile's victims has settled into the mud at the deepest part of the pool. While conditions make searching difficult, a thorough pass (DC 25) will reveal a number of items that have collected in the pool over the years: 4d20 sp, 2d20 gp, 1 large black pearl (worth 200 gp), and a +1 *buckler*.

Area 2-4 – Common Room (EL 6): Read or paraphrase the following:

Once this grand hall must have been a place of awe and majesty, with brightly colored frescoes layered atop masterfully carved stonework. Now the colors are faded, the plaster chipped and stained, and the stonework all but concealed in blackened soot and mold. A number of lizardfolk make their home here, sleeping on beds of matted reeds. A primitive wall of reeds bisects the room, concealing the far side of the hall.

Nine lizardfolk reside here. If they have been warned of the PCs approach by one of the hunters in area 2-2, or by sounds of combat with the giant crocodile, they will be prepared to defend their home. Otherwise, 3 of their number will be asleep while the others pass the time turning hides into shields, sharpening their javelins, and curing fish over the fire.

The flimsy reed wall can be broken by a DC 15 Strength Check, or 10 points slashing damage.

Tactics: As the adventurers start up the stairs, one of the lizardfolk kicks over the barrels of highly flammable fish oil, instantly coating the stairs. This same round another lizardfolk hurls a flaming brand

onto the oil, igniting the stairs and the entire lower corridor. Anyone caught in the conflagration takes 1d6 points of fire points of damage per round. The fire continues for 1d4 rounds. Under the demon's orders, the lizardfolk practice this maneuver regularly, and can pull it off flawlessly every time.

Lizardfolk (9): hp 10, 10, 11, 13, 13, 14, 14, 16, 18; see stats above.

Area 2-4A – Channeling Pool (EL 3): Read or paraphrase the following:

A large dais stands against the western wall, crowned with a pool of water. A crude statue stands in the center of the pool. The statue resembles a human in hide armor, thrusting a jagged spear forward in triumph.

Now give out players handout D. The statue and the pool are defended by a ferocious water elemental that seeks to prevent anyone except druids and barbarians from accessing the pool's powers. The pool is only two feet deep, but is more than adequate for drowning.

Tactics: The elemental hides in the pool. It rises forth to attack any PC coming within striking range, except for barbarians and druids, who it does not attack unless provoked.

Treasure: At the bottom of the pool are 7 golden discs embedded in the stone (Spot DC 12 to notice). Each disc is decorated with the hammered likeness of an animal. The discs are magic sigils, gifts from the animal spirits worshiped by the temple's original shamans, and can still channel the powers of nature.

Anyone meeting a sigil's requisites and touching a sigil feels a violent, feral jolt as the spirit of the animal joins their being, granting the sigil's supernatural powers for a period of 1 hour (Will DC 20 to resist if unwilling). A character may only activate one sigil in a 24 hour period.

A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (local), Knowledge (history), or bardic knowledge check identifies the discs for what they are. If the sigils are pried lose they become mundane gold discs, worth 30 gp each. The sigils radiate moderate transmutation magic.

Sigil of the Bear: Prerequisites Str 12, Wis 13. The channeling character gains +2 Str, gains 30 lbs. of muscle mass, and seems to lumber when he walks.

Sigil of the Fox: Prerequisites Dex 13, Wis 13. The channeling character gains +2 Dex, grows a thin coat of sleek fur, and is struck by the overwhelming urge to cause mischief.

Sigil of the Tiger: Prerequisites Str 11, Dex 11, Wis 14. The channeling character gains +2 Str, +2 Dex and grows semi-claws that grant a claw attack that does 1d6 damage.

Sigil of the Snake: Prerequisites Dex 11, Con 11, Wis 14. The channeling character gains +1 initiative, +1 natural armor bonus to AC, and her skin becomes a layer of thin scales.

Sigil of the Turtle: Prerequisites Con 11, Str 11, Wis 14. The channeling character gains +2 natural armor bonus to AC and +2 Con, and his skin becomes thick and leathery.

Sigil of the Owl: Prerequisite Wis 17. The channeling character immediately "recalls" 4 different 1st level cleric spells (even if the channeling character couldn't cast spells previously) and grows a coat of downy white feathers. The spells are lost if they aren't cast within the hour.

Sigil of the Raven: Prerequisite Wis 17. The channeling character immediately "recalls" 4 different 1st level arcane spells (even if the channeling character couldn't cast spells previously), and grows sleek black feathers. The spells are lost if they aren't cast within the hour.

Water Elemental: CR 3; Medium Elemental (Water, Extraplanar); HD 4d8+12; hp 30; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 90 ft.; AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk/Full Atk Slam +6 melee (1d8+4); SA Water mastery, drench, vortex; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Listen +3, Spot +4; Cleave, Power Attack

Water Mastery (Ex): A water elemental gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls if both it and its opponent are touching water. If the opponent or the elemental is touching the ground, the elemental takes a -4 penalty on attack and damage rolls.

Drench (Ex): The elemental's touch puts out torches, campfires, exposed lanterns, and other open flames of nonmagical origin if these are of Large size or smaller. The creature can dispel magical fire it touches as *dispel magic* (caster level equals elemental's HD).



Area 2-5 – The Three Fates of Man: A small collapse has partially buried the door leading to this room, and the rubble must be cleared before the door can be opened.

When the door is opened, read or paraphrase the following:

Three rough hewn statues dominate this room. The first depicts a man covered in mottled pox. The second depicts a man bleeding from multiple wounds. The last shows a skeletal man, his hands raised in supplication. Before each statue is a rock platter filled with dusty treasures.

Now give out players handout E. If a sacrifice worth 10 gp or more is left before a statue, the worshipper gains the statue's particular blessing. In anything is taken from a platter, the thief suffers the statue's curse (Will save DC 18 to negate). Blessings are not stackable; curses are. Each statue's blessing may be activated only thrice per day.

Disease: 1 gold nugget (15 gp) and 5 uncut gems (20 gp each) rest in this platter. *Blessing:* for 3 days the worshipper is immune to disease (this will stall the progression of the Blight). *Curse:* the thief ceases to heal naturally for one week.

Starvation: 3 large gold nuggets (25 gp each) rest in this platter. *Blessing:* the worshipper will be sustained without food or water for the next week. *Curse:* for one week the thief loses 2 hp per day to a hunger that cannot be sated.

Violence: 5 gold nuggets (15 gp each) and 1 uncut onyx (13 gp) rest in this platter. *Blessing:* the worshipper will make every saving throw for the next hour. *Curse:* the thief will suffer maximum damage from the next 10 attacks *made in anger*.

Area 2-6 – Collapsing room (EL 3): Read or paraphrase the following:

Fallen boulders litter the floor of this room; a corpse of a lizardfolk lies crushed beneath the rubble.

A successful Search or Knowledge (mining) check (DC 10) will confirm the obvious: the ceiling of this room is ready to collapse. If anyone enters, it will do just that, inflicting 5d6 points of damage to anyone struck by the attack (+15 attack), and burying them beneath 100 pounds of rock and mud.

Collapsing Ceiling: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; no reset; Atk +15 melee (5d6, falling rocks); Search DC 15; Disable Device N/A.

Area 2-7 – Jerky Room (EL 4): Read or paraphrase the following:

A collapse has filled half this room, and a stream still trickles through the rubble. Against the opposite wall strips of meat are laid out on racks over beds of hot embers.

Four lizardfolk labor here, smoking the meat of their kills. If the PCs have made a great deal of noise getting this far, they will be ready for combat.

There is enough meat here to make for 20 days of iron rations, if one doesn't mind eating kobold, human and elf.

Lizardfolk (4): hp 9, 12, 12, 15; see stats above.

Area 2-8 – Chamber of the Hunt (EL 6): Read or paraphrase the following:

A door of hammered copper still seals this room. Embossed on the door is a scene depicting seven warriors attacking an enormous owlbear. The border of the door shows the hunters bringing the owlbear back in pieces. The arch above the door shows the hunters bowing low before the creature.

The door is indeed a seal, and must be broken with a Strength check (DC 20) to enter.

Once the door is open, give the players handout F. Inside seven scarecrows with spears are staged around what appears to be a masterfully preserved silver-backed owlbear of exceptional size. Unlike the rest of the temple, this room is dry, its contents perfectly preserved.

If anyone enters the room the magical stasis is broken. One of the scarecrows falls over and the zombie owlbear comes to life. It will take one round to destroy the remaining scarecrows and then go after the intruders.

While it seems the beast is too large to fit out the door, the owlbear is strong enough to burst through the opening in a single round.

Each of the 7 scarecrows carries a very real silver-bladed spear (worth gp 10 each).

Large Zombie Owlbear: CR 5; Large Undead Magical Beast; HD 16d12+25; hp 136; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +5; Grp +15; Atk/Full Atk Claw +11 melee (1d6+6) or bite +11 melee (1d8+6) or slam +11 melee (1d8+6); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ Single actions only; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 23, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: Toughness.



Area 2-9 – Path of Kings: Read or paraphrase the following:

A pair of embossed copper doors stand open here, the muddy stream wending its way between them and down the steps. From below comes the sound of running water and a slow, heavy drumming.

The doors are embossed with a series of glyphs. A successful Decipher Script (DC 17) will determine that the glyphs tell the story of a barbarian king being prepared for rebirth, his attendants being ritually sacrificed so that they might follow him into the afterlife. The last scene shows the king standing in a ring of lightning, a mighty sword held high.

The drumming sound is the lizardfolk drummer in area 2-11.

Area 2-10 – Entrance to Crypt: Read or paraphrase the following:

The stairs from the upper level end at a pair of locked copper doors. A small, muddy tunnel has been dug into the wall adjacent to the doors. The drumming is louder here.

These massive doors were barred from the *inside* by the priests and slaves who built the tomb. (The priests slaughtered the slaves afterwards and immolated themselves in devotion to the king.) The

lizardfolk, unable to break down the seal to the crypt, opted to tunnel around instead, digging to the east.

Area 2-10A – Mouth of the Snake (EL 5): An enormous giant constrictor snake, the shaman's pet, has taken up residence here, lurking in the shadows at the far end of the cave, eagerly waiting for prey. It attacks any non-lizardfolk who enter.

Giant Constrictor Snake: CR 5; Giant Huge Animal; HD 11d8+14; hp 79; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +8; Grp +23; Atk/Full Atk Bite +13 melee (1d8+10); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Constrict 1d8+10, improved grab; SQ Scent; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +4; Str 25, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Climb +17, Hide +10, Listen +9, Spot +9, Swim +16; Alertness, Endurance, Skill Focus (Hide), Toughness.

Area 2-11 – Trash Corridor (EL 1): Read or paraphrase the following:

Once this corridor must have been a grand tribute to the power of the barbarian empire, but now it is filled with trash. Waste is piled knee high in places, with paths cutting through the detritus. A pair of half-buried, broken stone sarcophagi lie near the center of the mess. The walls are ringed by a single row of small holes drilled at waist level. There must be several hundred in all.

In the center of the room a single lizardfolk sits atop a mound of trash, slowly beating a massive kettle drum.

At all hours of the day and night, one of the lizardfolk is here beating a regular, slow rhythm. The sound resonates through the entire lower level, serving as an alarm against attackers: if the drumming ceases and doesn't resume, the lizardfolk of the lower level will be alerted and prepare for an assault.

Close inspection of the walls reveals mold-covered frescoes depicting the life of the king, from his divine birth to death. Characters decoding the glyphs (DC 17 Decipher Script) learn that the king died in battle with a mighty demon, and was buried in the temple in a ritual intended to confer eternal life. The glyphs also show that the skull of the demon was buried in the king's treasure vault.

Those brave enough to inspect the holes will discover that each holds a skeletal finger, the last tribute of the slaves that built the tomb.

Lizardfolk (1): hp 9; see stats above.

Area 2-11A – False Door Trap (EL 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

A pair of copper doors stands proudly against the southern wall. Spartan and plain, their only decorations are the rows upon rows of empty holes lacing their surfaces.

Characters might guess that holes in the doors are meant to be filled with the finger bones taken from the holes ringing area 2-11, but this is incorrect. Touching the door triggers a fusillade of darts that targets anyone standing before either door.

Fusillade of Darts: CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; Atk +18 ranged (1d4+1, dart); multiple targets (1d8 darts per target standing before the doors); Search DC 19; Disable Device DC 22.

Area 2-12 – Tomb of the High Shaman (EL 4, 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

The stone arch above this tomb is decorated with a pair of glyphs: the sign of the Owl and the Raven. Inside the alcove rests a stone sarcophagus. It is split into two halves, upper and lower, bound together by loops of woven green cord.

This is the where the wisest of the King's councilors awaits his rebirth. Characters inspecting the sarcophagus (Spot DC 20) will notice that the reed cord is strong and shows no signs of rot; indeed it is still wet with sap as if it had been woven earlier that day. The cobwebs accumulated on the sarcophagus disprove that theory.

The answer is that the ritual *worked*. The High Shaman is due to be reborn any century now, and his regenerative energies are invigorating the plants around him.

The High Shaman won't be up to full power anytime soon. Still, he makes an exquisite corpse: fresh juices mixing with a body that has been rotting away for the last several hundred years. If his crypt is disturbed, vines will leap to the attack, and the High Shaman will flip off the lid of his sarcophagus, eager to defend the tomb of his liege.

Treasure: The High Shaman was buried with a gold *amulet of armor* +1, an onyx circlet (worth 50 gp), and three bronze spear heads (worth 1 gp to collectors).

High Shaman, Mummy: CR 5; Medium Undead; HD 8d12+3; hp 55; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +4; Grp +11; Atk/Full Atk Slam +11 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot); SA Despair, mummy rot; SQ Damage reduction 5/-,

darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, vulnerability to fire; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +8; Str 24, Dex 10, Con -, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +8; Alertness, Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Despair (Su): At the mere sight of a mummy, the viewer must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same mummy's despair ability for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mummy Rot (Su): Supernatural disease-slam, Fortitude DC 16, incubation period 1 minute; damage 1d6 Con and 1d6 Cha. The save DC is Charisma-based. Unlike normal diseases, mummy rot continues until the victim reaches Constitution 0 (and dies) or is cured.

Animated Vines (2): CR 2; Medium Construct; HD 2d10+20; hp 30, 35; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk Slam +2 melee (1d6+1); Space/Reach 5 ft./10 ft.; SA Constrict; SQ Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5; Str 12, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Area 2-13 – Tomb of the First Warrior (EL 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

The stone arch above this tomb is decorated with a single glyph: the sign of the Bear. Inside the alcove rests an undisturbed stone sarcophagus.

This is the tomb belonging to the fiercest of the King's champions: the First Warrior. Like the High Shaman, if his sarcophagus is disturbed, the Warrior will aid the effort by flipping off the lid himself.

Treasure: The Warrior wears crude *copper plate armor* +1, carries a *dragon hide shield* +1, and wields a club sporting blades of sharpened obsidian that serves as a masterwork weapon.

First Warrior, Mummy: CR 5; Medium Undead; HD 8d12+3; hp 80; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 29, touch 10, flat-footed 29; Base Atk +4; Grp +11; Atk/Full Atk Spiked Club +12 melee (1d8+10 plus mummy rot); SA Despair, mummy rot; SQ Damage reduction 5/-, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, vulnerability to fire; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +8; Str 24, Dex 10, Con -, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +8; Alertness, Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Despair (Su): At the mere sight of a mummy, the viewer must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or

be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same mummy's despair ability for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mummy Rot (Su): Supernatural disease-slam, Fortitude DC 16, incubation period 1 minute; damage 1d6 Con and 1d6 Cha. The save DC is Charisma-based. Unlike normal diseases, mummy rot continues until the victim reaches Constitution 0 (and dies) or is cured.

Area 2-14 – Tomb of the Swift Runner (EL 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

The stone arch above this tomb is decorated with a single glyph: the sign of the Fox. Inside the alcove rests an undisturbed stone sarcophagus, covered in a scattering of fresh flower buds.

This is the tomb of the King's messenger and trickster: the Swift Runner. He rests inside the stone sarcophagus, organs pumping fresh life through his desiccated corpse. The Runner was once arrayed in fine leather armor decorated with rare furs, but his armor and rich clothes have all moldered into dried rags that stink of the grave.

Like his fellows, the Swift Runner is on the verge of being reborn into this world. Unlike his fellows, the Swift Runner is as proactive in death as he was in life.

Tactics: If the sarcophagus is disturbed, the Runner will stay motionless until the lid is off. He will lead off the first round by casting *darkness* from his necklace (see below), and then try to pull a target into the sarcophagus. Protected from attacks by the poor victim in his embrace, the Runner will use the next round to *blink* out of the sarcophagus, materializing in the hall where he will hasten to awaken as many of his fellows as he can (areas 2-12, 2-13, and 2-16).

With a little luck the party will still be hacking their companion to bits when the other mummies come calling.

Treasure: "The Shaman's Gift," a *necklace of spell-storing* with *blink* and *darkness* (CL 6) presently stored.

Swift Runner, Mummy: CR 5; Medium Undead; HD 8d12+3; hp 49; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +4; Grp +11; Atk/Full Atk Slam +11 melee (1d6+10 plus mummy rot); SA Despair, mummy rot; SQ Damage reduction 5/-, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, vulnerability to fire; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +8; Str 24, Dex 10, Con -, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +8; Alertness, Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Despair (Su): At the mere sight of a mummy, the viewer must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the same mummy's despair ability for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mummy Rot (Su): Supernatural disease-slam, Fortitude DC 16, incubation period 1 minute; damage 1d6 Con and 1d6 Cha. The save DC is Charisma-based. Unlike normal diseases, mummy rot continues until the victim reaches Constitution 0 (and dies) or is cured.

Area 2-15 – Desecrated Tomb: Read or paraphrase the following:

This tomb has been ransacked, the cover of the sarcophagus lying broken on the floor. Any corpses or treasure has long since been removed, leaving only dust, cobwebs and scraps of foul-smelling rags.

The mummies that once occupied these sarcophagi have been killed by the lizardfolk, inadvertently preventing the rebirth of the barbarian king (see area 2-22).

Area 2-16 – False Tomb of the King (EL 7): Read or paraphrase the following:

A single mysterious glyph is carved into the stone arch above this tomb. Inside rests a stone sarcophagus bound in ropes woven from gold wire. The sarcophagus is decorated with chips of obsidian and metal plating that flash in the dim light.

A pair of massive white wolves watch over the tomb, perfectly preserved despite the march of the ages.

A successful Decipher Script check (DC 20) will determine the glyph to be an obscure sign for either lightning or dragon; the distinction is muddled and unclear. (This refers to the method of the King's rebirth; see area 2-22.) The massive wolves that guard over the tomb were a pair of mated winter wolves raised by the barbarian tribe. Lower beasts than man, they completed the return trip from the afterlife much quicker than the other undead on this level, and have returned to full strength. If the tomb is disturbed in any way, their stasis will be broken and the pair will leap to the attack, defending the tomb to their death.

No corpse rests inside this sarcophagus. Instead, a narrow, man-sized shaft descends 15 ft., dropping

to area 2-20. This shaft is planted with several thousand bronze needles pointed up at a 45-degree angle. These needles make it feasible for someone to climb up the shaft, but it will prove nearly impossible for anyone to climb down. Most creatures will find themselves simply hung up in the first few feet, poked by dozens of sharpened needles. Creatures climbing down the shaft are hit by 1d4 needle attacks per 5 ft. traveled; each needle attacks at +6 and does 1d3 damage.

Treasure: The ropes binding the tomb closed are worth 250 gp. Taken together, the obsidian chips and hammered silver plating atop the sarcophagus are worth 100 gp.

Mummified Winter Wolves (2): CR 5; Large Magical Beast HD 6d10+18; hp 70, 65; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +6; Grp +14; Atk/Full Atk Bite +9 melee (1d8+6 plus 1d6 cold); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Breath weapon, freezing bite, trip; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, low-light vision, scent, vulnerability to fire; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide -1*, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Spot +6, Survival +1*; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Track.

Breath Weapon (Su): 15-foot cone, once every 1d4 rounds, damage 4d6 cold, Reflex DC 16 half. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Freezing Bite (Su): A winter wolf deals an extra 1d6 points of cold damage every time it bites an opponent, as if its bite were a frost weapon.

Area 2-17 – Harem Chamber/Nursery (EL 6): Read or paraphrase the following:

This enormous chamber was once a pair of tombs, but has since been emptied and enlarged. A dozen small fires line the walls, filling the air with a smoky haze and casting a sinister red glare over the cavern. Sleeping pits are dug into the floor, while tanned hides and skulls, strung like beads, decorate the walls.

Eight lizardfolk make their home here, the king's personal harem. If the drumming in area 2-11 was interrupted, the 8 will be lying in wait, ready to launch a savage attack with javelin, tooth and club. Otherwise, it will take them 3 rounds before they can organize a defense.

The fires are used to warm large rocks which are carefully placed in the muddy pool, keeping its temperature well heated. Ten lizardfolk eggs are incubating in the mud against the far wall.

Hidden around the chamber (Search DC 15) are

scraps of treasure that have escaped the notice of the king and shaman: 18 gp, 22 sp, and 3 gold nuggets worth 10 gp each. Half buried, yet glowing beneath the mud (Search DC 20), is the legendary elven blade, "Shadower," a +1 *short sword of spell storing*, with the spell *blindness* currently stored.

Lizardfolk (8): hp 14, 15, 16, 17, 9, 13, 16, 18; see stats above.

Area 2-18 – King of the Pit (EL 6): Read or paraphrase the following:

This muddy chamber is dominated by an 8 ft. wide pit. The top of the pit is covered in a crude grate of thick branches tied with thick cord. Dark oaths come from below, spoken in a slithering tongue.

The pit drops 30 ft. to a mud-bottomed oubliette. Here lurks N'dereg, the deposed king of the lizardfolk, living off scraps tossed to him by his tribe and rats he lures into the pit. A proud and willful ruler, N'dereg lost his throne to a puppet king groomed by the tribe's shaman.

After eight months alone in the oubliette, N'dereg is quite mad. Still, he can speak halting Common, and will try to buy his way out of the pit with any number of seemingly impossible promises: he will claim to know the location of the crypt's treasure (true), and a magic throne that confers immense powers to any that sit upon it (also true).

If freed from the pit, N'dereg will help the party to kill the shaman that betrayed him (area 2-19) but will turn on the PCs as soon as the shaman falls.

If the PCs attack N'dereg from on high he will burrow into the mud. He has weathered this and far worse.

Even in his age, N'dereg is a formidable lizardfolk. His scales bear witness to a life of violence. He stands nearly 8 ft. tall, and every inch is covered in steely sinew.

N'dereg, lizardfolk Ftr5: CR 6; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8+5d10+21; hp 68; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6/+1; Grp +11; Atk great trident +12 (1d10+6); Full Atk great trident +12/+7 melee (1d10+6); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will -1; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 13, Wis 6, Cha 16.

Skills: Jump +6, Swim +8; **Feats:** Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (great trident), Weapon Specialization (great trident).

Possessions: Masterwork great trident.

Area 2-19 – Court of the Lizard King (EL 8): Read or paraphrase the following:

This large chamber is filled with molding cushions and sodden blankets. Rotten tapestries have been hung on the walls and candlesticks stuck in the mud in mocking imitation of a real court.

The King was once a powerful champion, but since his coronation he has spent his days and nights lazing about in a stupor, attended by his guards and harem, while the shaman makes all the real decisions for the tribe.

If the drumming in area 2-11 was interrupted, or if loud combat has taken place nearby, the lizardfolk will be ready for combat. The shaman and guards will be at the head of the room, bolstered by spells. The king, meanwhile, will be hidden behind the western wall, and will flee with a screech as soon as combat begins; he has grown too attached to the idea of his position as king to defend it in combat. This is a lizardfolk with everything to lose.

Development: The shaman is only the latest in a long line to acquire his power directly from worshipping Obitu-que. As the shaman fights, his body crackles with red, eldritch flames. These flames cause no damage and give off no heat, but are clearly visible. Whenever the shaman casts a spell, the flames swirl above him and form the face of the demon prince, sneering with profane delight. This changes when the shaman dies: the flames pull into a tiny mote of brilliant heat, then explode out, inflicting 2d10 points of fire damage to anyone within 10 feet (DC 11 Reflex save for half damage).

The King's Flight: The king will flee toward area 2-22, barely missing the pit trap, dive into the pool and swim to the throne. There, cornered and desperate enough to make a final stand, he will take up the obsidian sword and set into motion a fatal chain of events. See area 2-22 and **Rebirth of the King** for the gory details.

Treasure: Displayed about the room atop small rocks and woven reed mats are the "king's shinies," the collected treasure of the tribe: 2,612 sp, 1,203 gp and 317 pp in an open pile, 1 copper breastplate, 17 gold nuggets (worth 10 gp each), 3 potions of *cure serious wounds* (CL 6) in ceramic jugs, and 14 obsidian-tipped javelins.

Lizardfolk King, lizardfolk Ftr2: CR 3; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8+2d10+4; hp 34; Init 0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk claw +6 melee (1d4+3) or bite +4 melee (1d4+3); Full Atk 2 claws +6 melee (1d4+3) or +4

melee (1d4+3); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Jump +5, Swim +7; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Toughness.

Shaman, lizardfolk Drd2: CR 3; Medium Humanoid; HD 2d8+2d8+4; hp 28; Init 0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk masterwork steel claw +4 melee (1d4+2) or bite +1 melee (1d4+1); SQ nature sense, animal companion, wild empathy, woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +8; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Jump +3, Swim +5; Craft Fetish, Multiattack.

Possessions: masterwork steel claws (1d4+1 points of damage) worn over natural claws, *elf ear fetish* (+3 to one save; see page 35).

Spells Prepared (4/3; save DC 13 + spell level): 0 – *flare* (x2), *resistance*, *virtue*; 1st – *inflict light wounds*, *summon nature's ally I*.

Lizardfolk guards (4): hp 18, 17, 13, 10; see stats above.

Area 2-20 – Treasure Vault (EL special): Read or paraphrase the following:

A deafening waterfall tumbles from the ceiling, filling this room with a cold spray. A king's trove of armor, weapons and goods fill the room. The darkness is softened by the luminescence of magic, but something oppressive lurks in the air, chilling your blood.

This room can be entered via the pit shaft from 2-16 or the secret door to the east (Search DC 13, easily found due to the stream running beneath it).

When the barbarian king was interred, this is where his people placed the treasure of his kingdom, a wealth of items that would await the king upon his rebirth. The waterfall makes it difficult to hear anything below a shout in this room, potentially complicating matters to dire effect.

Nearly everything in the room is infected with a slick green-black slime. The only item not coated is a massive skull, the resting place for the spirit of the demon prince Obitu-que. The demon skull has a giant ruby (2000 gp) in each of its five eye sockets; the rubies pulse red in time to the heartbeat of the nearest living creature.

The demon has no fear of the PCs. It has survived thousands of years and expects to live for many thousands more. Its chief goal is to cause violent mischief by possessing PCs and turning them against one another.

The demon Obitu-que can attempt to *dominate* living creatures 3 times per day. The demon can force the psychic attack on intelligent creatures within 30 ft. Given a choice between characters, the demon will always choose the one with the weakest Wisdom.

This domination takes the form of psychic battle that lasts for 3 rounds, during which the target takes 1d4-1 points of damage per round. The victim will see the demon prince manifest in all his terrible majesty as a 5-eyed glabrezu that immediately leaps to the attack, but the combat takes place entirely in the victim's mind. The rest of the party will only see the character drop to his knees, clutching his forehead and screaming in agony as every muscle in his body goes taut. At the end of 3 rounds the target must succeed on a Will save (DC 20).

If the target succeeds in his save, the demon skull goes dormant for 8 hours. If the character fails in his save, his body is possessed by Obitu-que per *domination*, during which time the demon uses the victim for any variety of nefarious purposes (often pretending *not* to be possessed). The character can attempt a new save once every 24 hours.

Protection from evil makes a target immune to the domination. Once a character has successfully saved against the *domination*, Obitu-que cannot attempt to dominate that character again for 24 hours. The psychic battle can be ended prematurely by carrying the target more than 30 ft. from the skull. This abrupt disengagement is psychically damaging and results in 1d10 points of damage to the target.

Destroying the Demon Skull: The demon skull is invulnerable to all spells and physical damage, unless it is brought within 25 ft. of the Maw (area 1-10). At this point the skull has the following statistics: hardness 10, 10 hp, Break DC 26. If it is destroyed and the all pieces are cast into the Maw, the curse of the Blight is lifted. See Return to the Forge (page 33), for the dramatic finale.

If even a single portion of the skull remains (a filched gem perhaps), the Blight is lifted, but the demon spirit survives. After one week of recuperation it possesses a suitable host and begins seeking revenge.

Treasure: The vault once housed the wealth of a dark-age warlord, but much of that treasure has been destroyed by the passage of time. Items prone to rot or rust (wooden chariots, cloaks, mundane armors and weapons, boots, tapestries, clay vessels, vellum manuscripts and the like) all crumble or tear at a touch. The following items have sur-



vived: +1 *keen dire flail*, a suit of fur-tufted +2 *hide armor of cold resistance*, and a +2 *mighty composite longbow* (+4 Str bonus; requiring a Strength Check, DC 21, to string).

Area 2-21 – Pit Trap (EL 1): The slope of the corridor increases sharply here. Combined with the wet algae covering the floor, it makes negotiating the corner tricky under the best of circumstances (Balance DC 20). Increase the difficulty to 22 if the maneuver is attempted at a jog, and to 24 if someone is trying to take the corner at a sprint. (In his flight, the lizardfolk king only barely makes the corner.)

Anyone failing the save slides to the end of the corridor and drops into a chute which immediately funnels them into 2-22A. Climbing back up the chute without gear or aid is extremely difficult (Climb DC 27).

Area 2-22 – The Throne of Kings: Read or paraphrase the following:

A mighty throne room looms before you in the darkness. Across the mighty hall, a dour granite throne sits atop a low dais. Atop the throne sits a crowned skeleton, reigning from beyond the grave, a mighty obsidian greatsword at its side. The floor of the hall is filled with brackish

water, and crude stone dragons are carved into the high ceiling at each of the cardinal directions, their maws thrown wide in exultation.

Now give the players handout G.

This is the final resting place of the barbarian king. Unfortunately, when the lizardfolk destroyed the corpses in the western sarcophagi (areas 2-15), they ruined the king's chance of ever being reborn. The skeleton is simply a mundane pile of bones, but PCs may not believe that at first. The water here is 3 ft. deep, and covered in black algae.

The rite wasn't a complete failure; the mystic energy necessary to return a body to life still yearns to be released. The lizardfolk king will likely trigger this flood. GMs may want to save the dramatic elements of this scene for when the party arrives.

Rebirth of the King: The lizardfolk king will flee here from area 2-19, swim to the throne and take up the obsidian sword, triggering a rush of mystic power. Sustained bolts of blue lightning course from the maws of the dragons, transfixing the lizardfolk king with awesome power. In an instant he begins to glow with supernatural life, infused with the power of a demigod.

At this point the lizardfolk king inherits the following statistics:

Lizardfolk King, "Reborn Version": HD 20; hp 150; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15 touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +10; Grp +10; Atk/Full Atk None; SA *Lightning bolt*; SQ Immunity to fire and poison, resistance to acid 10 and cold 10, spell resistance 15, levitation; AL NE; SV Fort +13, Ref +3, Will +13; Str –, Dex –, Con –, Int –, Wis –, Cha –.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12; Combat Casting.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will – levitate; 1/round – lightning bolt, 6d6 damage, DC 13 Ref save half, as per spell (CL 6th).

On the following round the lizardfolk king, his entire body glowing with impossible radiance, levitates 10 ft. above the water, and throws his arms wide, dropping the stone walls and ushering the wattle golems (area 2-22A) into the room. Then he begins to cast lightning bolts about the room with a simple gesture of his blade.

Unless a person has spent the last several centuries doing the necessary spiritual work, the raw power is too much for a physical body to handle. The lizardfolk king died the moment the lightning began, his mind just doesn't know it yet. If the PCs think to "ground him" for at least 2 rounds, the power will pour from his body like water from a bot-

tomless bucket. Otherwise the king may be destroyed by spells and weapons. Left to his own devices, the king collapses to the water, dead, on the 10th round after his coronation.

There are a number of creative ways to ground the king, but the most heroic would be to leap into the air and grapple the king for 2 incredibly painful rounds, using one's body as a conduit. As the raw magic finishes coursing from the lizardfolk through the character, both drop into the water. The lizardfolk will be dead, and the conduit-character must make a DC 30 Fort save or drop to –1 hit points (unstabilized), and fall comatose, subject to drowning once she hits the water. If she is pulled from the water and healing is applied, the character will awaken as usual. The heroism will have paid off: some of the raw power will remain with the character, conferring an additional 1d12 permanent hit points to her total.

If a PC reaches the obsidian sword before the lizardfolk king, the results are disastrous. Just like the lizardfolk king, the PC is blasted with raw magic power, learns to levitate, has his hit points increased by a factor of 10 and is promptly slain (Fort DC 30 to resist; success indicates fall comatose as above). He floats about for a bit, celebrating his new status as demigod, then collapses into the water, dead, on the 10th round after his coronation.

Skill Checks: PCs who stop to think may be able to deduce some of the implications of the room. A DC 20 bardic knowledge check recalls the full details of the obsidian sword and the rites of the long-lost kings. A DC 16 Spellcraft or Knowledge (arcana) gives a clue that the way to defuse the spell effect is to ground the lizard king.

Treasure: The bolts of eldritch might that blast the lizardfolk also infuse the greatsword and crown with magical power. After the lizardfolk collapses, both retain their new enchantments. The *obsidian greatsword* acts as a *wand of lightning bolts* (CL 6) with 17 charges remaining, while the crown becomes an *greater crown of counterspells*, identical in purpose and function as the ring of the same name, but able to hold three designated counterspells at once. The *obsidian greatsword's* wand-like powers are specially designed to be used while wielding the sword. They can be used without the Use Magic Device skill by anyone proficient with a greatsword and able to read the command word on the hilt.

Area 2-22A – Army of Straw (EL 4): Read or paraphrase the following:

This wet hall is filled with many still figures standing at attention, their weapons held at the ready. Four turn as one, revealing their nature: horrid living statues built of wattle and reeds.

This hall was once home to an army of animated statues, but time and moisture have taken their toll, and only 4 remain. They will attack anyone that enters their line of sight. If the walls to area 2-22 are dropped, they will march forward to serve their king.

Animated Statues(4): CR 2; Medium Construct; HD 2d10+20; hp 30; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk Slam +2 melee (1d6+1); SQ Construct traits, dark-vision 60 ft., low-light vision; Hardness 6; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5; Str 12, Dex 10, Con –, Int –, Wis 1, Cha 1

Hardness (Ex): An animated object has the same hardness it had before it was animated.

Wrapping Up: Return to the Forge

Once the party has the demon skull in hand, all that remains is to return to the Forge and cast the crushed skull into the Maw (area 2-10). In their absence, the surviving members of the Forge will have begun repairing any damage caused by the PCs during previous assaults. Moreover, their number will be bolstered by a war party of 10 elite orcs sent by the Mountain King. Even if Kyleth, Maeve, Graah and Backra were all slain, these orcs will have wrangled the survivors into manning the Forge once more.

All this activity has drawn the attention of Stygoth; if general melee erupts, the dragon drops out of the mist, attacking with blind fury. If the PCs are having a difficult time with the defenders, have Stygoth direct the bulk of his attacks against the orcs, kobolds and gnolls. If the PCs are having an easy time of things, have Stygoth face them directly, stalking the heroes through the battle-torn Forge.

Elite Orcs, orc Ftr1 (10): CR 2; Medium Humanoid; HD 1d8+1d10+2; hp 15; Init 0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk longsword +3 melee (1d8+2/9-20) or javelin +1 ranged (1d6+2); SQ light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will -1; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Search +2, Spot +1; Power Attack.

Possessions: Javelin, longsword, scale mail, large wooden shield.

Destruction of the Forge: If the PCs succeed in casting the broken demon skull into the Maw, a horrible screeching noise like a soul being ripped in half fills the air. Tremors sweep the area, building to dramatic, earth-shattering quakes. The sacrificial platform (area 1-9) and lift (area 1-8) fall into the Maw. The rock walls of the Maw collapse, pitching anyone within 20 ft. into the ravine (Ref save DC 10 to outrun), which is immediately filled with a crashing wave of water from the surrounding swamp. Anyone caught in the collapse takes 3d6 points of damage from the fall, 1d12 points of bludgeoning damage from the water, and are in immediate danger of drowning. Getting out of the flooded Maw requires a successful Climb check (DC 15).

Every building and tower in the compound collapses in the quake, dealing 1d12 points of damage to anyone caught inside.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As the tremors settle, the oppressive mists lift, revealing a scene of awful destruction.

The buildings and the walls of the Forge have all collapsed. The air is filled with the cries of the wounded and dying. The surviving humanoids begin to retreat into the swamp, shielding their eyes from the rays of the sun.

The Maw itself is no more. In its place is simply another muddy bog, deeper than its cousins, perhaps, but never again a source of Blighted corruption.

Against impossible odds, you and your companions have carried the battle. With weary bodies but triumphant hearts, you regroup, seeing to the wounded and taking stock of the day.

THUS CONCLUDES THE LEGACY OF THE SAVAGE KINGS

Rewards

Reward experience normally for combat and traps. In addition, you may elect to award an additional 2,000 XP to the party for destroying the demon skull and the Forge. Destroying Blight Blades earns good-aligned PCs an XP bonus equal to 1/10 the value of the Blades.



Appendix 1: New Rules

New Magic Items

Ars Maleficus: This massive tome is bound in the skin of an elder medusa, and contains the collective knowledge of seventy-seven unbroken generations of practicing wise women, witches and warlocks. While the knowledge contained in the tome has often been put to sinister ends, it is not evil in and of itself.

If a spellcaster studies the contents exclusively for 20 months minus his Intelligence score, he gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (nature) and Spellcraft checks, as well as the limited use of the following item creation feats: Brew Potion, Craft Fetish (see below) and Scribe Scroll. These bonus feats only function when the spellcaster works with the tome at his side; i.e. the spellcaster does not have the feats, but references the tome to use them.

In addition, a spellcaster that has mastered the text acquires the following spell-like abilities while working with the massive tome in hand: 1/week - *bestow or remove curse*, *scare*, *scrying*, and *geas*. These abilities are as the spells cast by an 13th level caster.

The tome always ends on a single blank page. If a spellcaster draws a pint of her own blood and mixes it with 10,000 gp worth of rare inks and powered gems, she may cast arcane mark on the page to special effect: if the caster is killed she will be *resurrected*, as per the spell (CL 13), on the next full moon following her death. The arcane mark fades as the days count down to the next full moon, then disappears completely when the spellcaster is resurrected. Preparing this special ink costs the caster 1 permanent point of Constitution.

Strong Divination and Evocation; CL 17; Weight 6 lb.

Blight Blades: Blades wrought from Blight are unusually rigid and do not hold an edge as well as steel. The blades tend to chip in battle, forming jagged, serrated edges; these edges are poorly suited for armored battle, and yet are ideally suited for *cutting*. The spirits of these cursed blades yearn to salve their pain by spilling the blood of others.

Blight is not an easy material to work with. But for those who have the talent, persistence, or skill, the results are often weapons of legendary evil.

Every Blight Blade that has survived creation is considered a masterwork weapon. Blighted blades are not magical and do not register as such if subjected to detection. (They do register if evil is detected, due to the Blight, an evil property.)

Because of their quickly serrated edges, Blight Blades

convey a -1 penalty to attack opponents wearing heavy armor (or its equivalent: any creature with a natural armor bonus of +5 or more). However, the wounds they do inflict are always deep and ragged. A cut from a Blight Blade does 2 additional points of damage. Worse, the bleeding from a mortal wound dealt by a Blight Blade cannot be stopped by mundane means. Unless treated with magic, the victim will bleed to death at the rate of 2 hit points per round.

Blight Blades are of sufficient quality for enchantment, and readily take to curses; often casters discover that their curse has been somehow augmented.

Weak Necromancy; price 800 gp plus the cost of the normal item; double weapons cost double (+1600 gp).

The Blighted Helm: This savagely-horned helmet is wrought entirely of the dark, metallic Blight and has no visor. It would seem that anyone donning the helmet would be blind. This is true, but not in the traditional sense.

The helmet instantly slays anyone of 3 or less levels or hit dice that tries to don it (no save permitted). For those that survive the culling, the results are both a blessing and a curse:

- The Blighted Helm allows the wearer to see the Ethereal Plane, perceiving the Prime Material Plane as an overlay of ghostly images. This sight allows the wearer to strike at a being's spiritual center, doubling their critical threat range. (Example: a greatsword threatens a critical hit on a roll of 19-20. If the wielder were wearing the Blighted Helm, the range would be 17-20.)
- The Blighted Helm grants the wearer a +2 profane attack bonus.

Being made of refined Blight, the Helm also accrues certain disadvantages:

- The wearer gains no experience from any activity, combat or otherwise, while the helm is worn. Any experience gained is granted to the Helm, which gains levels as a fighter, adding to the Helm's profane attack bonus accordingly. (Sinister GMs might wait for a character to fail to gain expected levels before discovering this trait.) Presently the Helm is second level with 2,001 experience points.
- Any time the wearer enters combat, he flies into a blood frenzy identical to a barbarian rage, with two exceptions: the frenzy cannot be ended prematurely, and the wearer becomes unable to distinguish between friend from foe, indiscriminately attacking

any creature within 30' for as long as the frenzy continues.

Strong Evocation and necromancy; CL 15th; Weight 3lb.

New Feat

Craft Fetish (Item Creation)

You can invest common items with uncommon significance. A thief's lucky coin, the amulet given to a young mother to insure a safe childbirth, and the necklace of finger bones worn by a goblin chieftain, are all examples of fetishes.

Prerequisite: Spellcaster level 2nd+.

Benefit: You may create a one-use magic item with one of the following properties:

- +3 luck bonus to one attack roll
- +3 luck bonus to one damage roll

- +3 luck bonus to one saving throw
- +3 luck bonus to one skill check

Creating a fetish takes 8 hours, during which time you must spend 50 XP and 25 gp in raw materials. A fetish's magic properties are lost as soon as the fetish is activated. Up to three fetishes may be carried at once, but only one can be activated at any time, and their effects can never be stacked.

A fetish can be activated by any character of any class in a manner appropriate to the fetish. Sometimes this is a command word, other times a physical motion like rubbing a coin. In most cases, activating a fetish is a free action.

Many backwater villages have a wise woman or warlock that crafts fetishes for superstitious commoners, and itinerant "fetish mages" can often be found in foreign bazaars, selling strange smelling relics that guarantee fortune and fame. In this – as in all cases – the buyer should best beware.

Appendix 2: Pregenerated Characters

Character	Cole	Silver	Hondo	Skerret	Mortigan
Sex	M	F	M	F	M
Race	half-elf	halfling	half-orc	elf	human
Class/Level	Cleric 5	Rogue 5	Fighter 5	Wizard 5	Paladin 5
CR	5	5	5	5	5
Size	Medium	Small	Medium	Medium	Medium
Height	5' 6"	3' 9"	6' 9"	4' 8"	6'2"
Weight	95 lb.	53 lb.	231 lb.	75 lb.	180 lb.
Alignment	NG	CG	CN	NG	LG
AC	22	18	17	15	21
Touch AC	11	15	12	14	11
Flat-footed AC	21	14	15	11	20
Hit Points	42	34	61	19	57
Speed	20 ft	20 ft.	40 ft.	30 ft	20 ft.
Initiative	+1	+8	+2	+8	+1
Strength	14	13	19	10	16
Dexterity	12	19	14	18	13
Constitution	16	16	16	12	16
Intelligence	12	13	9	18	12
Wisdom	17	9	12	9	14
Charisma	11	9	7	11	14
Fort Save	+7	+5	+7	+2	+9
Ref Save	+2	+9	+3	+5	+4
Will Save	+7	+1	+2	+3	+5
Armor	full plate, large steel shield, <i>amulet</i> <i>of natural armor</i> +1	+1 <i>leather</i> <i>armor</i>	spiked breastplate	<i>bracers</i> <i>of armor</i> +1	full plate, large steel shield
Spells Per Day	5/4+1/3+1/2+1	none	none	4/4/3/2	1
Melee Bonus	+5	+5	+9	+2	+8
Ranged Bonus	+4	+8	+7	+4	+6
Damage Mod.	+2	+1	+4	+0	+3
Base Atk	+3	+3	+5	+2	+5
Grapple	+5	-1	+9	+0	+8

Domains & Spellbooks

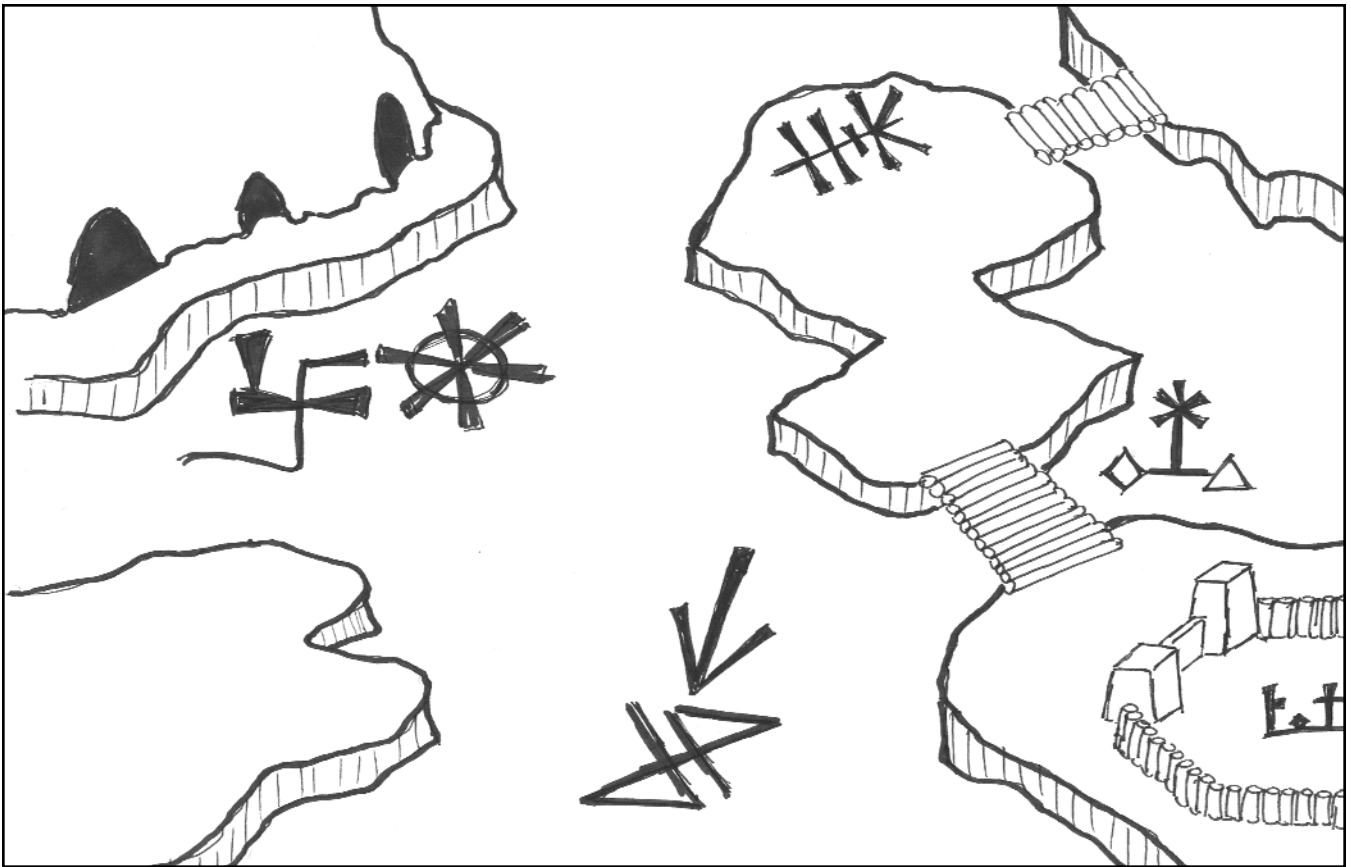
Cole	Healing, Good
Skerret	0 – <i>arcane mark, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, mending, message, open/close, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, resistance</i> ; 1st – <i>cause fear, charm person, identify, magic missile, mage armor, sleep, summon monster I, true strike</i> ; 2nd – <i>scare, flaming sphere, invisibility, summon monster II</i> ; 3rd – <i>dispel magic, fireball, flame arrow, invisibility sphere</i> .

Skills & Feats

	Skills	Feats
Cole	Balance -5, Climb -4, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +6, Escape Artist -5, Heal +11, Hide -5, Move Silently-5, Spellcraft +9, Spot +5, Swim -4	Combat Casting, Improved Turning
Silver	Appraise +4, Climb +11, Disable Device +8, Hide +16, Jump +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +14, Open Lock +12, Search +9, Spot +7	Improved Initiative, Stealthy
Hondo	Balance -2, Climb +0, Escape Artist -2, Hide -2, Intimidate +6, Jump +0, Move Silently -2, Swim +0	Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (great axe)
Skerret	Concentration +9, Decipher Script +12, Knowledge (Arcana) +10, Search +10, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +12, Spot +2	Combat Casting, Improved Initiative
Mortigan	Balance -5, Climb -1, Concentration +7, Escape Artist -5, Hide -5, Jump -3, Move Silently -5, Swim -3, Ride +9, Use Rope +5	Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Weapons & Equipment

	Weapons	Magic Items	Other Items
Cole	masterwork morningstar, heavy crossbow, 20 bolts	Divine scroll (CL 3rd) <i>cure light wounds</i> (x2), <i>summon monster I</i>	Backpack with waterskin, one week's trail rations, bedroll, flint and steel, holy symbol
Silver	masterwork shortsword, 4 daggers, shortbow, 20 arrows	<i>Potion of cure moderate wounds</i> (CL 5th)	Backpack with waterskin, one week's trail rations, bedroll, flint and steel, thieves' tools, 10 torches, 50' rope, hammer, 10 iron stakes
Hondo	+1 <i>great axe</i> , mighty composite longbow (+4), 20 arrows	<i>Potion of bull's strength</i> (CL 4th)	Backpack with waterskin, one week's trail rations, bedroll, flint and steel
Skerret	Masterwork longsword, shortbow, 20 arrows	Arcane scroll (CL 3rd) - <i>magic missile</i> (x2), <i>mage armor</i> (x2), <i>summon monster II</i>	Backpack with waterskin, bedroll, one week's trail rations, flint and steel
Mortigan	+1 <i>longsword</i> , mighty composite longbow (+3), 20 arrows	<i>Potion of cure moderate wounds</i> (CL 5th)	Backpack with waterskin, bedroll, one week's trail rations, flint and steel, 10 torches, 50' rope, grappling hook



....the first part bile of toad, cast with bones, set aflame
The Disease has claimed the Dragon. With the Dragon gone
who has the power to crush the Witch and her Army? But
there is another way... entrails tell me her power is drawn
from the Corrupted Earth, the same Taint born from the
sins of the Demon.

The Savage King killed the Demon once, sealing his bloody trophy
in his tomb. Have the Lizards awakened It?

It falls to my army to finish the task: bearing the skull to
its final resting place, and feeding the man its bitter pill.
Found three dead ravens in the swamp today. The end is
near...

My Darksome Love -

The Blight continues to grow. Your fears are unfounded; the land can not cure itself of this plague. Evil always begets evil.

There is one small matter. I suspect the initial cause of the Blight was an ancient demon prince, a spirit so profane that I dare not give it a name. Local lore suggests that the demon was slain by a barbarian warlord. If remnants of the demon still exist, and if they were ever returned to the Maw, I cannot predict what might result. I will take steps to ensure that the lizardfolk are unable to retrieve any remains from the barbarian tomb. Moreover, with very little effort I can be assured of

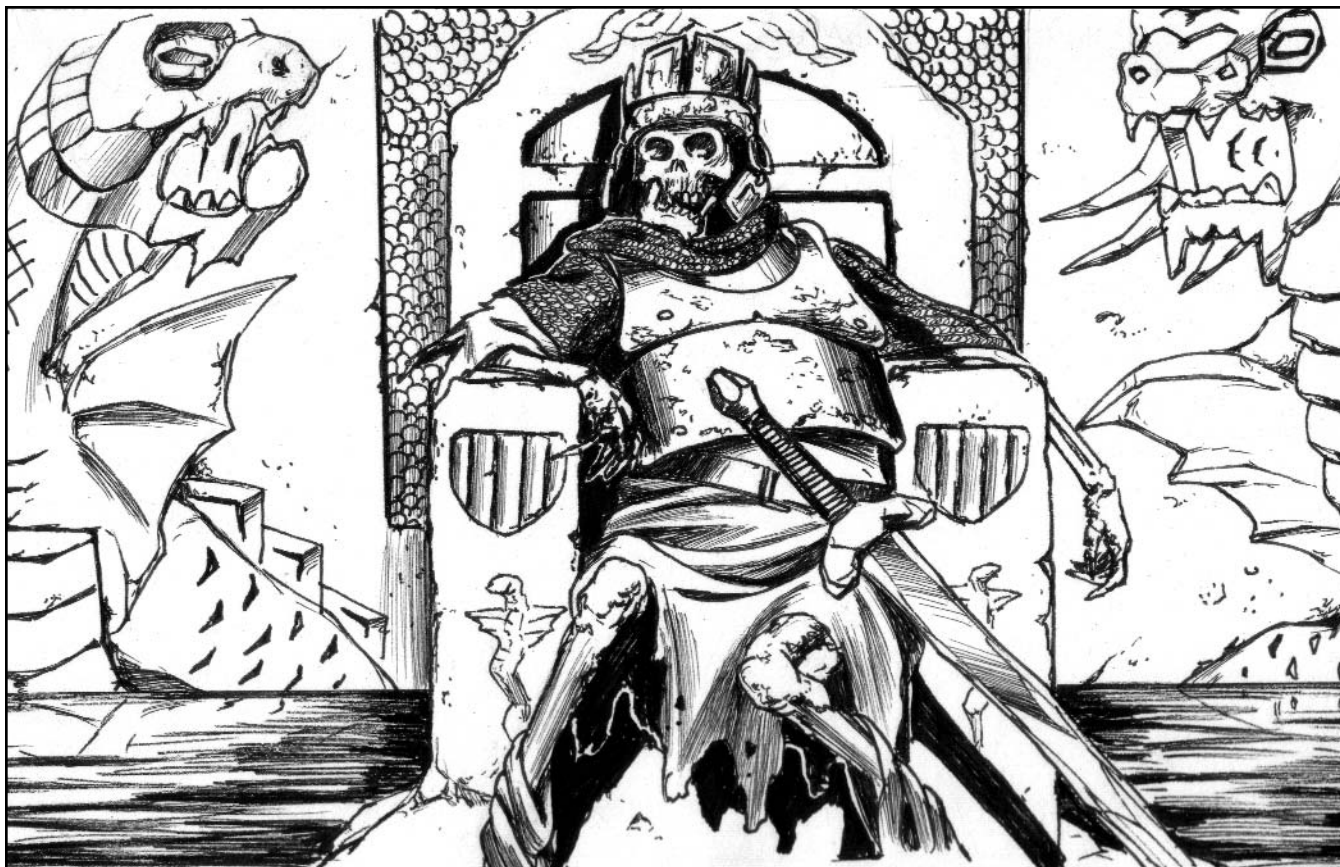


Players' Handout E



Players' Handout F





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